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ARCHAEOLOGY AND POST-COLONIALISM IN SOUTH AFRICA.

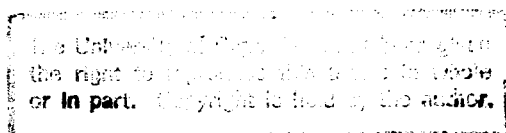
THE THEORY, PRACTICE AND POLITICS OF ARCHAEOLOGY
AFTER APARTHEID.

by

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Department of Archaeology at the UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN.

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Archaeology should be conceived as acting as a catalyst in the transformation of the present, for without commitment to one's own historicity, the discipline becomes little more than an escape from our own time and place.

Final sentence of Michael Shanks and Christopher Tilley's *Social Theory and Archaeology* (1987: 208).

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SUMMARY

I take my lead from a paper by Bruce Trigger (1984) in which he divides the disciplinary field into three modes or forms of archaeology: a colonialist archaeology, a nationalist archaeology and an imperialist archaeology. He goes on to suggest (1990) that South African archaeology is the most colonialist archaeology of all. Trigger was writing at a point before the current political transformation in South Africa had emerged over the horizon of visibility. Writing somewhat later, and from the point of view of a Third World archaeologist, I ask: What would a *post-colonial* archaeology look like? In particular, what would it look like from the point of view of South Africa in the late 1990s?

Answering this question involves a number of things. In the first place, it involves looking at the history of colonialism and archaeology, and apartheid and archaeology, and the manner in which archaeology has been formed by the experience of each (Chapter 1 "Archaeology and Colonialism"; Chapter 3 "Archaeology and Apartheid"). In the second place, it involves engaging with the disciplinary metropolises, and with the ideas and practices emanating from those centres. Chapter 2 takes the form of an engagement with post-processual theory, and with the idea of theory in archaeology more generally. In the third place, I suggest that it involves opening up the question of social value. In this case I examine archaeology in relation to notions of nationalism, identity and memory, and in terms of its value in education (Chapter 4 "The Social Value of Archaeology"; Chapter 5 "Archaeology and Education"). In the fourth place it involves looking at the political-economy of the discipline, and at the forces and interests which have shaped the relation between First World and Third World archaeologies. Here I distinguish two forms of archaeology which seem to me to be presently emerging, or to have the potential to emerge, in South Africa (and in the Third World more generally). The first is a post-colonial archaeology; but the second is what I call a neo-colonial archaeology (this is in the final chapter, "Post-Colonial versus Neo-Colonial Archaeologies").

In concluding, I suggest that a post-colonial archaeology is not so much about stridently advancing a new theory or a new approach (like the New Archaeology), so much as it is about posing a set of questions. These are the questions which have guided and informed my own approach in this work: What does it mean to be an archaeologist in the Third World? For whom do we write? To whom are we accountable? What should be our relationship to the traditional centres of the discipline? What is the nature of our relationship to our own history? Most

importantly: How does archaeology take its place in a post-colonial society? What does archaeology have to say to those of us who are reaching beyond the stock and standard answers to create for ourselves and for the discipline of which we are a part a future which is more lively, more democratic, and more tied to the realities of place in a newly independent society?

According to my reading, a post-colonial archaeology distinguishes itself on a number of points: In the first instance, through a sense of place which accepts the priority of indigenous interests, concerns and needs above those of the metropole. Furthermore, it interprets these as a source of vitality, and as the origin of original insights. Its aim is to be itself, rather than a pale copy of the archaeology practiced elsewhere. Secondly, through a version of accountability which interprets this broadly, as belonging not merely to the scientific process or to the discipline, but to society at large. Thirdly, through acknowledging the implicitly political nature of archaeological enterprise. The tie between past and present is essential and inescapable. Moreover, archaeological pasts can only take their meaning in the light of present realities (the South African case is an apt demonstration of failure in this regard). Fourthly, through an emphasis on the social value of archaeology. This is over and above the other forms of value in which archaeology participates: academic value, research value, heritage value and commercial value. In the fifth place, through accepting for archaeologists their role as "intellectuals" as Edward Said (1994) has defined the term. To be an intellectual in Said's sense is to be critical, independent, and to take on the function of "speaking truth to power". Above all, it is to be a kind of universal commentator, writing not only about the past, but about the present in which pasts find themselves represented, remembered and relived. In the sixth place, a post-colonial archaeology foregrounds the importance of theory in archaeology, and the need for reflexivity. I interpret the failure of South African archaeologists as being, in large measure, a failure of the guiding ideas with which they worked.

There are a number of specific themes, projects and ideas which I attach to the notion of a post-colonial archaeology. The first is an interest in materiality, and in the social effects of materiality (this has been a conspicuously under-theorised topic in the traditions of Western thought). The second is an interest in archaeology and education. The third is an interest in the topics of nationalism, identity and memory in relation to the archaeological past. Finally, I suggest that the very extremity of South Africa as a case study (the most colonialist of colonialist archaeologies) proves its value as a source of instruction and comparison. Derrida puts this rather well when he writes that in apartheid "the customary discourse of man, humanism and human rights, has encountered its

effective and as yet unthought limit, the limit of the whole system in which it acquires meaning" (1986: 337). It was an encounter with these limits which formed the World Archaeological Congress in 1986. Writing more than ten years later I suggest that this same sense of extremity can point the way for a further series of necessary transformations in the discipline.

A NOTE ON TERMINOLOGY

Processual archaeology:

Probably still the most widely practiced form of the discipline in Anglo-American archaeology, as it is in South Africa. In South African archaeology a concern with processual theory led to a focus on environmental and ecological relations (Deacon 1990). Trigger (1989) notes that functionalist and processual trends were evident in North American and Western European archaeology since the 1930s. He also writes of the importance of W.W. Taylor's *A Study of Archaeology* (1948) in establishing "the concept of processual change within cultural systems" (295). However, it was not until 1960s that processual archaeology emerged as an alternative to culture-historical archaeology.

The New Archaeology:

This refers to something altogether more specific, that is a school of archaeological theory associated with the figure of Lewis Binford who provided the familiar capitalization. The New Archaeology is noted for the vigorous nature of its polemics, and for its intellectual debt to the philosopher Carl Hempel. Binford outlined the programme of the New Archaeology in two papers, "Archaeology as anthropology" (1962) and "Archaeological systematics and the study of culture process" (1965).

Post-processual (also postprocessual) archaeology:

A broad church, it accommodates those forms of the discipline which have followed after processual archaeology. I use it here in the sense in which Hodder uses it in *Reading the Past* (Chapter 8, "Post-processual archaeology"). He writes of "the emerging characteristics of what might be termed a post-processual phase in archaeological theory" (156). This is taken to include, variously, structuralist archaeology, post-structuralist archaeology, feminist archaeology, and Marxist and materialist archaeologies. In a key passage he writes:

Unlike processual archaeology [post-processual archaeology] does not espouse one approach or argue that archaeology should develop an agreed methodology. That is why post-processual archaeology is simply "post-". It develops from a criticism of that which went before, building on yet diverging from that path. It involves diversity and lack of consensus. It is characterized by debate and uncertainty about fundamental issues that may have been rarely questioned before in archaeology. It is more an asking of questions than a provision of answers. (1994 [1986]: 181)

Structuralism and Post-structuralism:

I find that Terry Eagleton's *Literary Theory: An Introduction* (1983) remains the most useful introduction to these terms (despite its early date). Instead of rashly attempting a definition here I shall leave that to the body of the text. For the moment let me note that I follow Eagleton in using these terms without capitalization, and with the hyphenated form of the latter.

First World/ Third World:

The first of a pair of terms used to designate those territories subject to colonial rule, and conversely, the territories from which the imperial powers originate. Some would reject it as a classification of any value. In their introduction to *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader* (1995), for example, Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin specifically reject "the egregious classification of "First" and "Third" World" (3). Others have argued forcefully for its retention. In a 1986 essay called "Third World Literature in the Era of Multinational Capitalism" Frederic Jameson builds an entire literary classification on this distinction¹. I prefer Brenda Cooper's sensible intervention ("The End of the Third World?", 1992) in which she argues for a cautious retention of the terms. She notes that "in economic terms it is probably no longer possible to talk sweepingly about the Third World" (1). She suggests that while the terms retain their usefulness, it is no longer possible to use a designation like Third World "without turning the concept over, problematising and interrogating it" (1).

West/ non-West:

The "West" remains a widely used term in the post-colonial literature. In *Orientalism* Said uses it in two senses: in the first place, as an oppositional term to the "East" (the Occident versus the Orient); but also more freely in referring to "the industrial West", "Western hegemony", and "Western consciousness"². The notion of the non-West is less frequently encountered, but remains a useful, if

¹. This is in *Social Text* 15: 65-88. Aijaz Ahmed famously takes issue with Jameson on this point - see "Jameson's Rhetoric of Otherness and the National Allegory" (in *In Theory* 1992: 95-122).

². The extract from Said is in a collection edited by Patrick Williams and Laura Chrisman called *Colonial Discourse and Post-colonial Theory* (1994). The page references are respectively pages 134, 134 and 133.

inexact, umbrella term. Said uses it in a 1989 essay called "Representing the Colonized: Anthropology's Interlocutors". He writes of anthropology:

The history of that cultural practice in Europe and the United States carries within it as a major constitutive element, the unequal relationship of force between the outside Western ethnographer-observer and a primitive, or at least different but certainly weaker and less developed, non-Western society. (217)

Patrick Williams and Laura Chrisman use the term non-Western in their introduction to *Colonial Discourse and Post-colonial Theory; A Reader* (1994), in which they write:

a number of post-colonial writers have queried both history as an essentially Western construct and the relevance of "imported" Western theories such as Marxism and feminism in a non-Western context. (12)

However, the paradigmatic instance, to my mind, is Ashis Nandy's *The Intimate Enemy; Loss and Recovery of Self Under Colonialism* (1983) in which he makes extensive usage of both terms. He reminds us of the mutually constructed nature of West and non-West, and of the diversity which these terms disguise - the sense in which it would be more correct to speak of a plurality of Wests and non-Wests. Even given these qualifications the terms West and non-West serve to describe an objective reality which he finds useful, and which has political, economic, cultural and psychological consequences.

Black/ White/ Coloured:

These are apartheid designations. The term Coloured has a local and specific sense. Vivian Bickford-Smith, a noted historian of nineteenth-century Cape Town, a melting-pot if ever there was one, usefully defines Coloured as applying to those people "of darkish pigmentation who were descendants of slaves and/or "mixed" marriages with or between Khoi, Africans who spoke Bantu languages... and Colonists from Europe or their descendants" (1990: 37). I follow convention in using the capitalized form of this term. My use of these terms in no way condones theories of race of the kind which came to life and played such a determining role in the history of South Africa. Nevertheless, my story would be quite impossible to tell without them.

Sexist terminology:

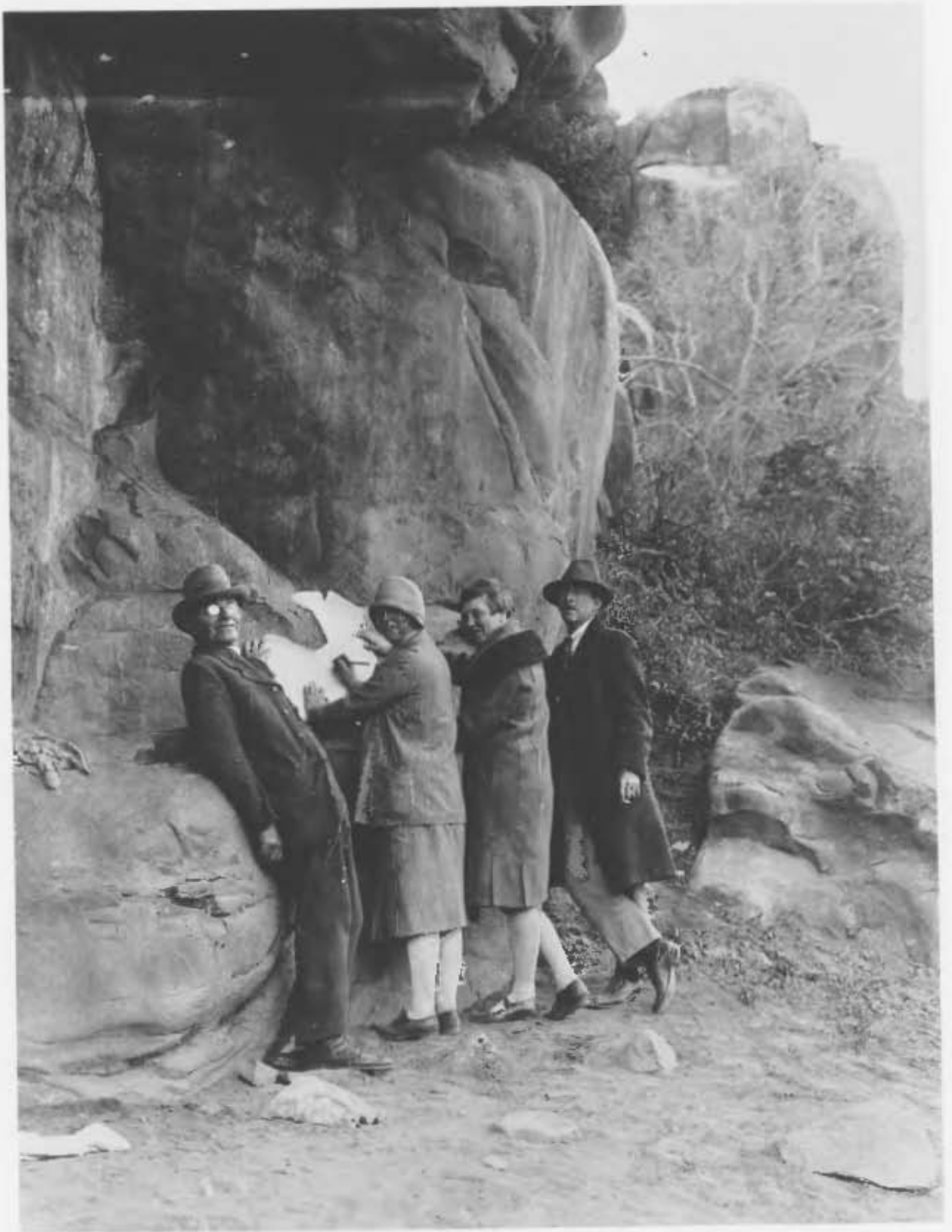
For most of its history archaeology has been, and remains, ferociously masculinist - although that, as they say, is another story and not one which I shall tell here. The literature is full of references to "mankind" and "the archaeologist, he...". While I have avoided such terminology in my own writing, where a source reverts to such usage I have left it intact without tagging on the necessary disclaimers in each case.

Artifacts/ artefacts:

It is one of the curiosities of archaeology that practitioners seem unable to agree what to call their principle form of evidence. Neither is the dictionary any help. The *Chambers Twentieth Century Dictionary* (New Edition, 1974) gives both forms, although it does note that the root is the Latin "arte" ("by art"). I use "artefact", although occasionally the sources refer to "artifact".

San/ Bushman:

The term Bushman is a colonial coinage, and for some time has been replaced in the academic literature by the term San. More recently it has come back into favour, not least among those who would claim Bushman descent. A complicating irony is that in the Western Cape, but also more generally, the term Bushman is still current as a term of abuse (rather like the term "Hotnot" or Hottentot). I tend to use the terms inter-changeably, although where a source uses one of the terms I follow suite.



Scene in a cave near Tarkastad, Eastern Cape, 1927. From left: Miles C. Burkitt, Mrs Peggy Burkitt, Mrs Winnie Goodwin and A.J.H. Goodwin (source: University of Cape Town Manuscripts and Archives Library; after J. Deacon 1990).

PREFACE

The first time I saw the photograph I immediately liked it, both for its strangeness and for its quirky charm. It appears in Janette Deacon's historical review, "Weaving the Fabric of Stone Age Research in Southern Africa" (in Robertshaw ed. 1990: 39-58), alongside the caption: *From left: Miles C. Burkitt, Mrs Peggy Burkitt, Mrs Winnie Goodwin and A.J.H. Goodwin at a cave near Tarkastad, Eastern Cape, in 1927.* We see Burkitt leaning back to show the tracing which the women are working on. His spectacles reflect discs of light at the camera and he makes an alarming figure with his offbeat pose, his mad expression. The women wear coats and sensible shoes. They offer a sidelong smile to the camera. Goodwin - who would have been the host in this scene, showing the older man one of his sites - looks dapper and composed. He and Winnie Goodwin have both unconsciously crossed a leg, so that their poses create a kind of connection between them. We see a small group arranged around their task; they are all waiting for the camera, and each has responded in their different way.

A good deal of the strangeness and the charm of the image comes from the clothing which the figures wear. They seem overdressed, as though transported from an altogether more genteel setting to the rough countryside of the Eastern Cape. Their clothing creates a sense of distance from the present. It speaks of a an alien social milieu, of a kind of colonial fortitude. I am reminded of the stories of Robert Broom who would appear on site at Sterkfontein in an old-fashioned butterfly collar.

In its way it is an important photograph. It shows two of the founding figures in southern African archaeology - perhaps the two founding figures. Goodwin was the first archaeologist to fill a professional post in South Africa. The previous year the scheme which he and Van Riet Lowe had proposed for a two-stage division of the Stone Age and the use of a local nomenclature had been adopted by the South African Association for the Advancement of Science. This is the scheme which - with the addition of a third stage, the Middle Stone Age - is still in use in sub-Saharan Africa. Burkitt was an influential figure in prehistoric research in the first part of the century, and went on to produce an important book on southern Africa. Yet, like so many old photographs, there is something unfathomable about it. It reaches us as a random moment, fortuitously preserved and passed down to the present. This tableau in the African veld stare back at us across the passage of the intervening years, their expressions full of meaning and purpose. Yet who is to say what has

passed between them? And what is it that they have to say to us, so many years later?

Let us, however, attempt to reach beneath the surface of the image. In true archaeological fashion, let us reconstruct some of its contexts, as a route to unpacking some of its meanings. We know that the photograph comes from a grand tour undertaken by Goodwin and the Burkitts - some 7000 miles in all - in the course of which they visited sites in South Africa and Zimbabwe. Burkitt was Lecturer in Prehistory at the University of Cambridge, and Goodwin had been his pupil before taking up a position in South Africa. The purpose of Burkitt's visit, which was at the invitation of the University of Cape Town, was to show him the sites and elicit his opinions in preparation for the meeting of the British Association in South Africa the following year. Already, then, we have this between the two men - this sense of a master/student relationship with its bonds of obligation, its slight sense of competition.

This relationship, and the idea of competition would have been on their minds. Burkitt had announced in the course of the tour that he was to produce a book on southern African prehistory. Goodwin, who for some years had been working on a book of his own, was goaded into a frenzied collaboration with his "correspondence pupil", Peter Van Riet Lowe. It became a kind of race between them. Whoever won would have produced the first comprehensive work on the subject. In fact, it was Burkitt who got in first with *South Africa's Past in Stone and Paint* (1928) (he completed his manuscript on the ship home). Goodwin and Van Riet Lowe's *The Stone Age cultures of South Africa* appeared in the following year. Both books, and particularly Goodwin and Van Riet Lowe's more empirical study, have since become definitive texts in their field.

The colonial setting of the scene would have given this relationship between the men a further twist. Burkitt appears as the Cambridge man, representative of the disciplinary metropole - the centre of heat and light in archaeology - but also as the representative of a Eurocentric tradition, with its set ideas about history. Goodwin appears as the expatriate and the colonial officer, with the divided loyalties of this position: loyalty to the metropole and to the idea of tradition, but also loyalty to his own idea of the place in which he finds himself. Burkitt argues in his book for Northern, and more specifically for European Lower Paleolithic, Mousterian and Upper Paleolithic influences in the stone-tool assemblages and rock art of southern

Africa. The idea of prehistory that he had gained from European contexts was so much with him that he was unable to consider the South African material without reference to it. What he saw in South Africa was a pale copy of what he saw at home.

In saying this, Burkitt was doing no more than repeating a conventional assumption that sub-Saharan Africa was an evolutionary cul-de-sac. What is surprising is that Goodwin, who had done so much to unshackle the South African sequence from European typologies, should repeat this view. He and Van Riet Lowe argue that many of the local stone-tool industries came to southern Africa with the migration of people from North Africa, a part of the world which had been touched by civilization by virtue of its proximity to Europe. Both men were sure that they stood in a part of the world where nothing of historical significance had originated, where people had never knowingly achieved anything in their own right.

And I think that this is the key to something disquieting about the photograph. It comes, I think, from the lack of concession to local contexts - a lack of concession of which their clothing is the outward sign. The other side of this is a sense of the intactness of the members of the group - their possession of a fixed sense of their own place in the world, and its meaning. They belong to a class which administered large parts of Africa (and the world) on the basis of a small number of unquestioned beliefs and assumptions: a belief in the benefits of British civilization; a belief in their own basic decency, in their goodness; and a kind of easy assumption of their own superiority. It rendered them bold and intrepid. This was a time when any number of their peers were tramping across the inaccessible parts of the world, conquering mountain peaks and energetically pursuing the new social sciences. But in retrospect, it also makes them seem heartless and limited in their vision. They were the beneficiaries of a colonial system which allowed them access to sites like the cave near Tarkastad, while absolving them of all responsibility towards the present, towards the history which had placed them there. Is there any way of jolting a worldview so formidably backed by the weight of empire? Is there any way of opening their hearts?

From my own perspective in the present the scene in the cave near Tarkastad seems redolent with the presence of people and events, crisscrossed by the tracks of history. The Eastern Cape is South Africa's frontier par excellence. From the time of the expansion of the Cape Colony's eastern boundary to the Great Fish River in

1778, the country around Tarkastad was the site of continual conflict. Between 1781 and 1852 a series of eight frontier wars were fought between Xhosa-speaking pastoralists and Dutch and British settlers competing for land and cattle. More recently, the Eastern Cape has been the spiritual home of the liberation struggle. Nelson Mandela was born there and returns there each year. The local university of Fort Hare has trained generations of activists.

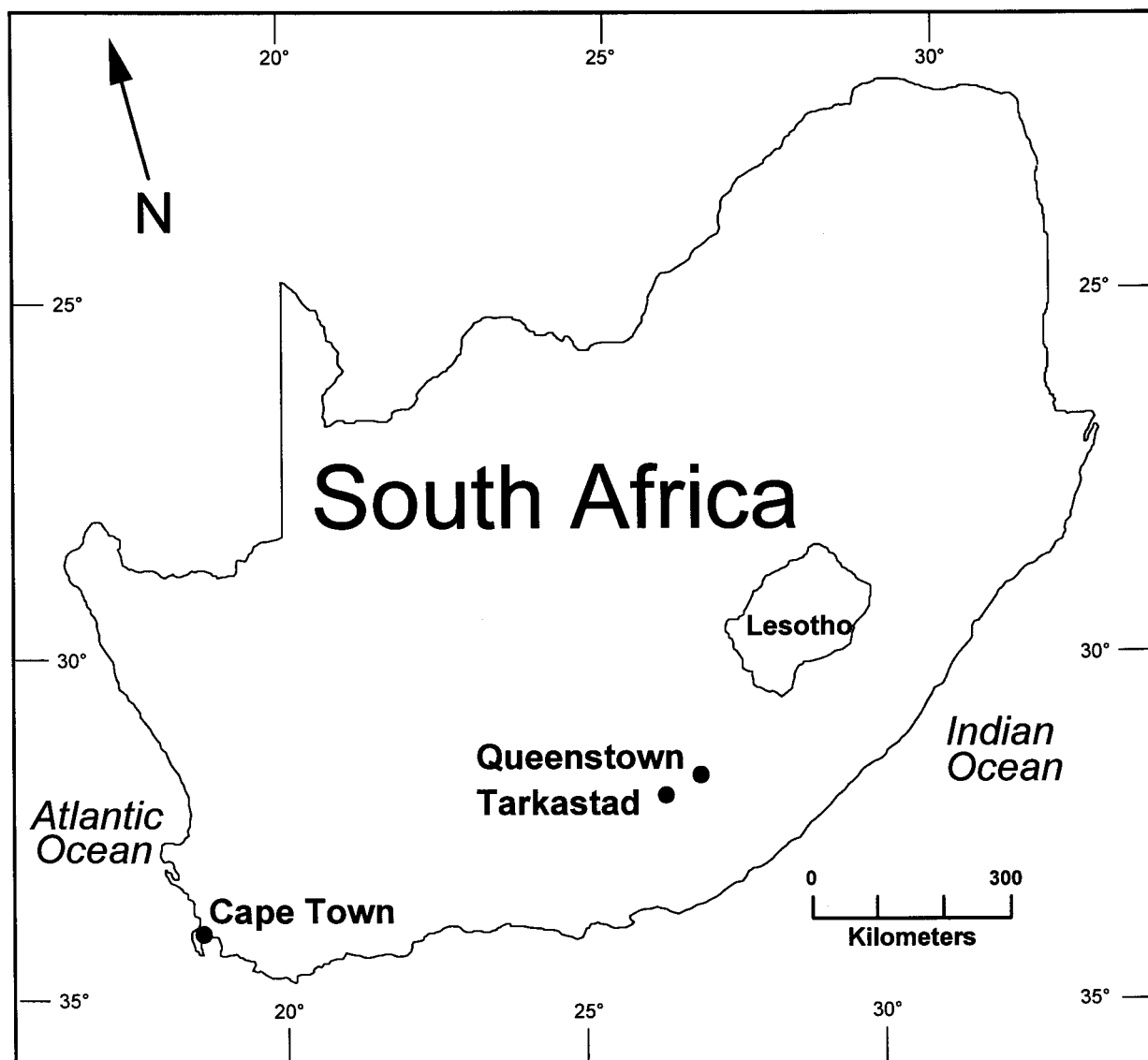
The ground on which Goodwin and Burkitt stood was intensely contested, but there is no sense of this in their work. In their writing they are entirely cold to the political present. Like Burkitt seeing Magdalenians in the African savannah, it is as though they look through the present to the traces of an imaginary past - projecting a fantasy of prehistory onto the harsh landscape around them. Burkitt was later to recall the visit to the cave in a terse sentence ("Near Tarkastad we noted some delightful paintings..." 1928: 142)¹.

I would like to move away from the group in the cave to tell a story, which in its way it is a typical South African story. The history books refer to it as the Bulhoek Massacre. It is a story which belongs to the part of the world in which the group found themselves for the photograph - Bulhoek is a part of the countryside outside Queenstown, and Queenstown is the nearest big town to Tarkastad - and it has its unravelling just six years before the scene in the cave. In the years following the First World War, Enoch Mgijima - the Prophet Enoch, as he came to be known - led a group of his followers to found "a refuge from oppression" at Ntabelanga, near Bulhoek. The group called themselves the Israelites, and were what we would now call an African religious sect. The society that they established, in the words of the source which I have used for this account, "gave substance to a dream cherished by many rural Africans: land for the landless, an escape from taxes and self-rule without white oppression"².

Enoch preached the virtues of cleanliness and purity, and encouraged his followers to lead an abstemious life. When the day of judgement comes, he told them, they would be transported to heaven in wagons, from out of the blood, fire and

1. The tracing, which Burkitt reproduces in his book, is a fine drawing of an ostrich.

2. This account of the Bulhoek Massacre comes from the *Reader's Digest illustrated history of South Africa* (1992: 326), a surprisingly creditable general history which has Christopher Saunders as its consultant editor and Colin Bundy as its historical advisor.



Map of South Africa showing positions of Tarkastad and Queenstown.

destruction. By 1921 the Israelites numbered more than 3000, and members had begun to occupy land illegally. The Secretary for Native Affairs, Edward Barrett, wrote in the idiom of the times:

Shorn of all absurdities it simply amounts to a Bolshevik seizure of land... The Israelite cult has spread, and other natives from elsewhere, attracted by the charms of a workless life, have joined the insurgents.

In December 1920 the government sent its new Native Affairs Commission to persuade the sect to leave. Mgijima's son Charles replied: "God has sent us to this place. We shall let you know when it is necessary that we go". In April 1921 the commission offered free rail tickets and rations to Israelites who would leave. There were no takers to this, or to a similar offer made a few weeks later. Meanwhile, converts continued to stream to the settlement, attracted by the imminent confrontation and fearful of the Prophet Enoch's judgement day.

Rumours circulated that the Israelites were making swords, and that they had obtained guns and ammunition. A force of 800 policemen were assembled in Queenstown under Colonel Truter. On 21 May he sent an ultimatum to Mgijima: his men would arrest Israelites, they would deport illegal residents and tear down illegal houses. The Prophet Enoch replied:

I understand that you, Sir, intend to come to Ntabelanga with an adequate force. May it therefore be known by one and all that the arms and forces shall be ruled by blood. As for myself, I am the messenger before the blood. The whole world is going to sink in... blood. I am not the causer of it, but God is going to cause it. If you then, Sir, Mr Truter, are coming out to make war, please inform me. I shall then write or say my last word before you destroy me.

On the 24 May 1921 while the Israelites were at their morning prayers, police armed with machine guns and artillery took up position on the surrounding hills. The Israelites responded by assembling 500 men to defend the settlement. A delegation was sent to demand the surrender of the Israelites, but they were defiant: "If it comes to a fight... Jehovah will fight with us and for us". Police were later to claim that they heard shots, or that they had heard Mgijima give the order to charge. They opened fire. The Israelite army surged towards the police ranks. They were dressed in white tunics and khaki shirts, and carried wooden clubs. In their charge on the police lines 183 were shot dead and 100 wounded. Enoch Mgijima who survived the attack was

arrested along with 100 of his followers. When police searched the settlement they found only two guns, both lying unused in Mgijima's house³.

The words of the Prophet Enoch ominously foretell the repetition of this scene of confrontation, and its attendant themes, under apartheid: land, freedom from oppression, exultation, the charge across the broken veld and the waiting guns. More immediately, this is the story which lay on the land when Goodwin and Burkitt visited Tarkastad in 1927, and for which they could find no place in their narratives. They were there to write prehistory not politics, and believed in both the importance and the feasibility of making that distinction. Neither was this a colonial aberration; in many ways it set a precedent. Turning to the future - that is, away from the random cruelty of Bulhoek, to the more systematic cruelty of apartheid - we find that this quality of erasing the present - and more, the quality of erecting a barrier in consciousness between people and events on the outside, and the enclosed world of the discipline - is something which has remained with archaeology. Bruce Trigger contributes the concluding essay to Robertshaw's volume, the volume in which the photograph appears. He writes:

South Africa has the largest number of professional archaeologists (especially in relation to the size of its white population) and has invested heavily in archaeology since the 1960s. Close contacts are maintained with professional archaeologists in Europe and America and the training of archaeologists within South Africa conforms to the pattern of these countries. The research carried out by South African archaeologists has likewise achieved a high technical standard and in some fields has won international recognition for pioneering new methods of analysis...

In spite of this South African archaeology remains the most colonial of all African archaeologies. As the creation of a white minority intelligentsia, its relationship to the majority of South Africans remains highly ambiguous...

In this respect at least, the relationship of archaeology to the majority of South Africans is not different in kind from that of American archaeology to a much smaller number of native Americans. In both the United States and South Africa prehistoric archaeology remains caught up in problems of internal colonialism long after each country has become independent. Yet, as the

³. The story of the Prophet Enoch and the Israelites has since become the subject of South Africa's first full-length indigenous opera. "Enoch, Prophet of God", with a score by Roelof Temmingh and a libretto by Michael Williams. In a production of 1994/5 Abel Motsoadi took the title role (*Weekly Mail and Guardian*, December 9 to 14, 1994).

contradictions in South African society grow deeper, this pose becomes ever more difficult for South African archaeologists to maintain. (1990: 316-317)

Writing at the end of the 1980s Trigger identifies a point of crisis for South African archaeology; the moment when the contradictions in its position - which he describes as the problems of internal colonialism - assert themselves. In 1985/6 the grand tour undertaken by Goodwin and Burkitt lent its metaphoric frame to another consideration of the state of the discipline in South Africa. Jointly authored by an upwardly mobile generation of South African archaeologists (Carmel Schrire, Janette Deacon, Martin Hall and David Lewis-Williams) it was published in *Antiquity* (60, 1986: 123-131) under the title of "Burkitt's Milestone". This paper was written at the invitation of the editors of *Antiquity*, in response to the exclusion of South African and Namibian archaeologists from the first World Archaeological Congress held in Southampton in 1986 - at the moment, we might say, when the political present had caught up with the discipline in this country. Its purpose, like that of Burkitt's book, was to brief a wider audience on the state of archaeological research in South Africa. The idea that the authors have is that they are heirs to the legacy of Burkitt and Goodwin. They have picked up the torch and carried it further, and this is what they set out to show in their paper. At the same time it is a reminder to the organizers of the World Archaeological Congress, those archaeologists at the old imperial centre, that they spring from the same source. South African archaeology is the child whom they have abandoned in the colonies, and whom they now shun.

1985/6 were the years of the township revolts and the States of Emergency; the years of massive state repression - in many ways the darkest days of apartheid. 1990, the year in which Robertshaw's collection appeared, was the year of the release of Nelson Mandela and the unbanning of political organizations; the year in which the status quo in South Africa finally broke. 1994, the year in which I began this project, marked the cusp of a different kind of transition; a year of elections, a year in which the foundations of the future began to be laid.

Where do we situate the discipline of archaeology in a period of transformation? Looking back, the scene in the cave seems so full of voices and presences: the voice of the Prophet Enoch and the dead of Bulhoek; the colonial present; intimations of apartheid; the future discipline which was to emerge in the footprints of the two men. In a very colonial fashion Goodwin and Burkitt fended off so much about the continent - its people, its pasts, its politics - even as they embraced aspects of its

prehistory. Now that history which Goodwin and Burkitt turned away from is upon us. The wheel has been brought full circle. "Mayibuye iAfrika! Mayibuye!" (Come back, Africa!) we used to shout in the days of apartheid. What space is there for a discipline like archaeology whose origins are so firmly bound up with the practices and institutions of colonialism? How do we re-imagine the scene in the cave, and the discipline to which it belongs, in the very different social context of South Africa in the late 1990s? Where do we go from here?

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION: ARCHAEOLOGY AND POST-COLONIALISM

In an important paper from the mid 1980s Bruce Trigger divides the disciplinary field into a number of "alternative archaeologies", each determined by their position in and orientation towards a global division of wealth and power ("Alternative Archaeologies: Nationalist, Colonialist, Imperialist", 1984). The particular world historical processes which Trigger identifies as being determining in this regard are those of nationalism, colonialism and imperialism. Each gives rise to a kind of archaeological practice - in its shadow - which replicates its dominant relations, shares its distinctive features, and repeats its style of operation and practice.

Thus nationalist archaeologies tend to glorify a national past and encourage a spirit of unity and cooperation. While the focus on "national" histories obscures class divisions in society, the political and ideological aim of nationalist archaeologies is the legitimation of national governments. Colonialist archaeologies tend to denigrate native societies by representing them as static and lacking in the initiative to develop without external stimulus. In this way they attempt to legitimate the colonial project. Imperialist archaeologies are archaeologies "with a world mission". They aim to influence the development of archaeology far beyond the borders of the countries in which they arise. Historically, imperialist archaeologies are associated with a handful of states which have enjoyed a disproportionate political and economic influence over their neighbours. Neither is there any escape from this fixed typology of forms. In Africa countries have tended to move from a colonialist to a nationalist type archaeology with independence. The United States, which now leaves its imprint on world archaeology, has moved from a colonialist to an imperialist type. Trigger's purpose is to refute the possibility of a united "world archaeology", implicit in the agenda of the New Archaeology. His point is that their particular histories have marked off and set apart the different types of archaeology¹.

¹. This theme is explored more fully in a subsequent paper, "Prospects for a world archaeology" (1986) in which Trigger notes that while some aspects of archaeology have been effectively internationalized for over a century, others have remained highly variable "and there appears to be no more chance of eliminating these variations in the foreseeable future than there is of erasing national, class and gender distinctions throughout the world" (1).

More recently Augustin Holl, one of the small number of black archaeologists working in Africa, has used a similar designation in his review of West African archaeology, "West African archaeology, colonialism and nationalism" (this is in Robertshaw's volume *A History of African Archaeology*, 1990). In his concluding essay to the same volume Trigger notes that Holl's usage is an encouragement to him to "refine" the concepts which he had earlier developed.

In "Alternative Archaeologies" Trigger was writing as a First World archaeologist concerned with the effects of colonialism on its subject people, and the role played by archaeology in this subjection. Writing some years later and from the other side of the divide - from South Africa in the late 1990s - I would like to explore the notion of a *post-colonial* archaeology. That is, the notion that we might move beyond the sterile and limiting antinomies of Trigger's types, burdened as they are by the weight of an oppressive past (colonialism, nationalism, imperialism), to find something more hopeful on the other side. And I want to do so with regard to a context with which I am familiar and which at the same time serves as an icon of a form of colonialism of an extreme kind, archaeological practice in South Africa.

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Politics of Hope.

For South Africans the past decade has been characterised by an extraordinary sense of opportunity. The dead hand of apartheid has lifted from society. Our long isolation from the rest of the world - and from one another - is at an end. We have been released from the suffocating enclosures, the prisons of the mind, and the future beckons. In the years since its re-emergence South Africa has provided the world with some unforgettable images. One was the moment on Cape Town's Grand Parade on 11 February 1990 when Nelson Mandela, released from 28 years in prison, appeared before the nation for the first time. To picture the scene one must imagine the long, hot afternoon, the vastness of the crowd, the air of hope and incredulity, fear and suspense. This was a person, remember, who had been held completely without communication for almost three decades: no photographs, no words, no news, no morsel of hope for a hard land in the grip of an oppressive

regime². Two generations of revolutionaries had come of age in his absence, around the Soweto school boycotts of 1976, and again in the township revolts of the mid 1980s. For us he existed as a screen memory; as a figure of legend and inspiration held in mythical seclusion, on a rock, in the ocean. To contemplate his return was to skirt the edges of millenarianism, resurrection, fantastic revival. And then suddenly and without drama Nelson Mandela stood before us on the balcony of the City Hall; and in the dignified manner of his address and the attentiveness of the crowd there was the sense of history having turned a corner, the sense that South Africa had a future we could believe in.

Another unforgettable set of images must surely be those arising from the first democratic elections in South Africa in April 1994. Against the backdrop of failed elections in Angola, the horror of "ethnic cleansing" in the former Yugoslavia, and the more straight-forward genocide in Rwanda, South Africans went to the polls. It was a moment of great dignity and affirmation. The images which emerged - the long walk to the polling station, the aged and the lame making the journey in wheel-barrows, and the peaceable nature of the queues - speak of a tremendous resolve, of a nation mobilizing to take charge of its future. And with this, the tremendous feeling of pride

². The writer John Coetzee has succeeded more than any other in capturing the sense of stiflement associated with life under apartheid - indeed this has been a connecting theme in his work. In a memorable passage from *Age of Iron* the protagonist ponders the nature of television news, and Afrikaner politicians:

Television. Why do I watch it? The parade of politicians every evening: I have only to see the heavy, blank faces so familiar since childhood to feel gloom and nausea. The bullies in the last row of school-desks, raw-boned, lumpish boys, grown up now and promoted to rule the land...

Legitimacy they no longer trouble to claim. Reason they have shrugged off. What absorbs them is power and the stupor of power. Eating and talking, munching lives, belching. Slow, heavy-bellied talk. Sitting in a circle, debating ponderously, issuing decrees like hammer-blows: death, death, death. Untroubled by the stench. Heavy eyelids, piggish eyes, shrewd with the shrewdness of generations of peasants. Plotting against each other too: slow peasant plots that take decades to mature. The new Africans, pot-bellied, heavy-jowled men on their stools of office: Cetshwayo, Dingane in white skins. Pressing downward: their power in their weight. Huge bull-testicles pressing down on their wives, their children, pressing the spark out of them. In their own hearts no spark of fire left...

We watch as birds watch snakes, fascinated by what is about to devour us. Fascination: the homage we pay to our death. Between the hours of eight and nine we assemble and they show themselves to us. (1990: 25-26)

at the outcome: for me it was the first time that I had associated pride with the idea of national identity³.

South Africa functions as a sign for many things in my text: for marginality, for African-ness, for the final and most complete working out of colonialism, and the locus of a totalizing form of oppression. But it also functions as a sign of hope, of possibility, and of the ability to surprise an increasingly jaded world. To live in South Africa in the Age of Mandela is to take part (who will deny this?) in an experiment in hope, in an attempt to prove wrong the doom-mongers and the nay-sayers. For some commentators, South Africa has functioned as the sign for a more universal kind of transformation. In a wonderful essay written on the occasion of the release of Nelson Mandela ("Many Years Walk to Freedom. Welcome Home Mandela!", in *Moving the Centre; The Struggle for Cultural Freedoms*, 1993) the Kenyan writer and critic, Ngugi wa Thiong'o develops this idea of a broader identification. He begins:

Watched by thousands who had gathered in Cape Town to witness the miracle and by millions of others around the world via television, Mandela walked hand in hand with his wife, Winnie, to a personal freedom and triumph. He has written the date - February 11, 1990 - into world history. And when he spoke he brought joy as he publicly reaffirmed his belief in the people of South Africa and in the principles for which he had been prepared to die - a democratic, non-racial and unitary South Africa. (164)

He writes of the internationalization of the campaign for Mandela's release:

Thousands had marched for his release in virtually every city and village in the world. Streets had been named after him. Music in his name was selling in millions of records. Books had been written about him. Sculptors and painters had tried to capture the image of this prisoner of apartheid. The whole world had been waiting for Mandela. (147)

Ngugi speculates about the source of Mandela's power and appeal: "The most compelling thing about Mandela is how he endured the years of solitary confinement

³. Media reports from the time convey something of the atmosphere of that extraordinary week. For example, see the editions of the *Weekly Mail and Guardian* of May 6 to 12, 1994 (containing an election report and pictures headed "The week in which hope triumphed"), and April 29 to May 5, 1994 (a "Special election focus"). The latter contains "The will of the people triumphs" (4), and "A day of peace, patience - and chaos" (8). In particular, see the column by Mondli waka Makhanya, "A tough guy is moved to tears" (14).

and other tortures without ever surrendering to the racist vampires. In him people see the infinite capacity of the human spirit to resist and conquer. Hurrah for the spirit of resistance!" (147). In this vein he compares Mandela to Kwame Nkrumah, Ho Chi Minh, Nat Turner, and the Kenyan freedom fighter Dedan Kimathi. He writes: "All of these figures are heroic because they reflect more intensely in their individual souls the souls of their community. Their uniqueness is the uniqueness of the historical moment". These figures are "torches that blaze out new paths". In this role, "Mandela has been a torch for the South African people. The black people of South Africa are reflected in Mandela" (147).

Enlarging on this sense of identification, he writes: "Mandela is to black South Africa's struggles what black South Africa's struggle's are to the democratic forces of the world in the twentieth century. Indeed, South Africa is a mirror of the modern world in its emergence over the last four hundred years" (148). In South Africa we see the compression of world history, from Vasco da Gama's landing at the Cape of Good Hope in 1498, to its incorporation in the circuits of trade and capital, to their sad working out in apartheid. According to Ngugi: "In the South African system, people see the bitter fruition in this century to at least five forces which have bedevilled the real development of human beings: classical colonialism, neo-colonialism, slave wages, racism and the usurpation of the people's sovereignty through the denial of democracy" (149). His own sense of identification stems from a personal struggle against these various oppressions. In an even stronger statement, he writes:

South Africa is me. South Africa is you. South Africa is all the black people of the earth. South Africa is all the workers of the world. South Africa is humanity in a struggle to save itself. If the struggle for the recovery of a sense of human community is led by South Africa's masses through their political organisations... [then] it is equally true that Nelson Mandela has been its leading symbol. He has firmly held aloft the mirror in which the twentieth century has been looking at itself. (150)

This project has occupied me for the first four years of South Africa's democratic transformation. During part of this time I have been employed as a lecturer in African Studies in the Centre for African Studies at the University of Cape Town, itself a symbol of a new openness in South African intellectual life. It has seemed to me a useful context from which to review the development and the future possibilities of

my discipline. As Ngugi might put it, it is a good context from which to hold up a mirror to archaeology.

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What is Post-Colonialism?

Rather like post-modernism which has suffered the ironic fate of becoming the meta-narrative of the end of meta-narratives, the meaning of post-colonialism - a term intended to signal a fresh start for theory - is by no means clear. In an aptly titled paper, "The Scramble for Post-Colonialism" (1995), Steven Slemon identifies at least seven different senses in which the term post-colonialism is currently in use. He writes:

"Post-Colonialism", as it is now used in its various fields, de-scribes a remarkably heterogeneous set of subject positions, professional fields, and critical enterprises. It has been used as a way of ordering a critique of totalizing forms of Western historicism; as a portmanteau term for a retooled notion of "class"; as a subset of both postmodernism and post-structuralism (and conversely, as the condition from which these two structures of cultural logic and cultural critique themselves are seen to emerge); as the name for a condition of nativist longing in post-independence national groupings; as a cultural marker of non-residency for a third-world intellectual cadre; as the inevitable underside of a fractured and ambivalent discourse of colonialist power; as an oppositional form of "reading practice"; and - and this was my first encounter with the term - as the name for a category of "literary" activity which sprang from a new and welcome political energy going on within what used to be called "Commonwealth" literary studies. (45)

In the face of this heterogeneity the temptation "is to understand "post-colonialism" mostly as an object of desire for critical practice", rather than such a practice in its own right. In fact, Slemon takes the view that this diversity of meanings comes about "for much more practical reasons... [which] have to do with a very real problem in securing the concept of "colonialism" itself" (45). Despite this ambivalence Slemon writes in affirmation of the project of post-colonial theory, provided it is qualified by what he offers as a "two-part credo". The first part of this credo is that we retain a notion of an oppositional, anti-colonial role for post-colonial studies:

post-colonial studies, if nothing else, needs to become more tolerant of methodological difference, at least when that difference is articulated towards emancipatory anti-colonial ends... I have seen no evidence that the humanities carry any special brief for the global project of decolonisation, and so I would desperately want to preserve this function of decolonising commitment for post-colonial studies, despite its necessary investment in and ironic relation to the humanities complex. (51)

The second part of his credo echos Marx - the object of theory is not simply to describe the world, but to change it:

...wherever a globalised theory of the colonial might lead us, we need to remember that resistances to colonialist power always find material presence at the level of the local, and so the research and training we carry out in the field of post-colonialism, whatever else it does, must find ways to address the local, if only on the order of material applications. If we overlook the local, and the political applications of the research we produce, we risk turning the work of our field into the playful operations of an academic glass-bead game, whose project will remain at best a description of global relations, and not a script for their change. (52)

The notion of the "post-colonial" is occasionally found in the archaeological literature, sometimes in contexts which add further meanings to this range of possibilities. Tim Murray uses it in an essay called "Communication and the importance of disciplinary communities: who owns the past?" (1993) as a synonym for native or indigenous groups. He writes: "I have chosen to concentrate on one small aspect of the loss of disciplinary innocence... [that is] claims for ownership of the past made by post-colonial peoples. Naturally, the question of who owns the past can be asked of anyone, archaeologist or aboriginal person" (107). More usually the term post-colonial is used in a chronological and historical sense to refer to the period which succeeds colonialism. For example, in a section headed "Indigenous archaeologies" in *Reading the Past* (1994) Ian Hodder writes of "Western archaeologists working in non-industrialized societies, particularly in the post-colonial era..." (167)⁴.

⁴. The full quotation reads: "Western archaeologists working in non-industrialized societies, particularly in the post-colonial era became increasingly confronted both with the idea that the pasts they were reconstructing were "Western" and with an articulate rejection of these pasts as politically and ideologically motivated" (Hodder 1994: 167).

More recently, a group of post-processual archaeologists in Britain have drawn on post-colonial theory in reinterpreting the archaeology of the Roman period. The usefulness of post-colonial theory has been in making sense of Britain's experience on the colonial periphery of the Roman empire (and of the historical reversal of roles which subsequently made it an imperial metropole in its own right). For example, Jane Webster sets out to examine the discursive relationship between Roman imperialism and Western European imperialism, which she describes as "the cycle of interaction between ancient and modern colonialisms", and its influence on the study of Romano-Celtic religion⁵.

My own use of the term post-colonialism is necessarily more restricted than the several senses identified by Slemon. In the first place I take it to refer to the particular spirit of hope and possibility which follows the ending of colonial relations - or in the case of South Africa, of social relations reminiscent of colonialism - without being bound in a chronological sense to this period "after colonialism". One of the projects of the post-colonial literature has been to trace the formation of an anti-colonial impulse - or it may be, a post-colonial impulse - dating from the earliest days of colonialism. In one of the founding texts of post-colonial theory, a work by Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin cleverly titled *The Empire Writes Back; Theory and practice in post-colonial literatures* (1991) the authors specifically argue against this kind of chronological usage. They write: "The semantic basis of the term "post-colonial" might seem to suggest a concern only with the national culture after the departure of the imperial power" (1). They continue: "We use the term "post-colonial", however, to cover all the culture affected by the imperial process from the moment of colonization to the present day" (2). This is because: "there is a continuity of preoccupations throughout the historical process initiated by European imperial aggression" (2).

In the second place I use the term post-colonial to refer to an oppositional impulse or a desire to supersede the forms and practices of colonialism and replace them with something more lively and democratic. One of the critics, besides Slemon, who has argued forcefully for a greater sense of the oppositional role of post-colonial writing is the exiled South African writer Benita Parry. She has been critical of the

⁵. This is in a paper called "Necessary Comparisons: a post-colonial approach to religious syncretism in the Roman provinces", in *World Archaeology* 28(3): 324-338. Also see Webster, J and N. Cooper (eds) *Roman Imperialism: Post-Colonial Perspectives* (1996).

contemporary "colonialist discourse" theory of Homi Bhabha and Gayatri Spivak on the grounds that its effect has been to diminish the earlier intervention of critics like Fanon "who stood much more resolutely for the idea that de-colonisation is a process of opposition to dominance"⁶. However, as other writers have pointed out, a simple identification between post-colonialism and the notion of resistance is problematic, partly because the body of post-colonial writing has so many different sources. Tiffin puts this well in the introduction to a collection edited by Tiffin and Ian Adams called *Past the Last Post; Theorising Post-Colonialism and Post-Modernism* (1990). She notes that post-colonialism "might be characterized as having two archives". The first is writing from societies and regions which were formerly colonies of Europe. The second is "a set of discursive practices, prominent among which is *resistance* to colonialism, colonialist ideologies, and their contemporary forms and subjectificatory legacies" (vii). She notes that while these two archives are "intimately related", they are not "co-extensive". Rather, the "nature and function of this resistance form a central problematic of the discourse" (vii).

In the third place I understand the term post-colonialism to arise from a particular geographical and historical understanding of the world which places the countries of Western Europe and the United States at the "centre", and the former colonies at the "periphery" - and more importantly, to be contesting this understanding. This imperialist paradigm implicitly devalues that which arises from the periphery. It produces what Ashcroft *et al* describe in *The Empire Writes Back* as the phenomenon of "cultural cringe", that is the practices of cultural subservience to the metropole. In a similar connection, in an essay called "Circling the Downspout of Empire" (1990) Linda Hutcheon quotes Bharati Mukherjee in what she calls a "deep sense of marginality" (171). She goes on to write of the experience of being Canadian that "it is almost a truism to say that Canada as a nation has never felt

⁶. This is from the introduction to *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader* edited by Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin (1995: 10). Parry's essay, contained in the same collection, is called "Problems in Current Theories of Colonial Discourse". She writes: "Those who have been or are still engaged in colonial struggles against contemporary forms of imperialism could well read the theorizing of discourse analysts with considerable disbelief at the construction this puts on the situation they are fighting against and the contest in which they are engaged. This is not a charge against the difficulty of the analyses but an observation that these alternative narratives of colonialism obscure the "murderous and decisive struggle between two protagonists" (Fanon 1961: 30), and discount or write out the counter-discourses which every liberation movement records" (43).

central, culturally or politically"⁷. In the case of my own work I find myself in conversation with a discipline which has always been strongly centralised in terms of its arrangements, and which retains the habit of addressing its constituency of practitioners as though they were uniformly Western and white. As I suggest in the following section it makes writing a work of this nature a slightly surreal experience, as one finds oneself addressing disciplinary pundits in distant metropolises who both set the theoretical agenda and determine the terms of the debate - a bit like shouting down a toy telephone slung between the continents.

At the same time, in a more overarching way, there are two ideas which I want to abstract from this welter of theory, debate, point and counter-point, which have come for me to characterise and define the field of post-colonial studies. The first is the idea of "difference", and the second, paradoxically, is the idea of "sameness". I shall use these two ideas to structure my discussion in the remainder of this introductory section where I shall amplify them, but for the moment by "difference" I mean notions of Otherness and alterity, and the uniqueness of culture and experience in the non-West as opposed to the West.

The idea of difference has been a starting point for a great deal of post-colonial writing. For example, Ashcroft *et al* apply the term post-colonialism to "the new cross-cultural criticism" which has emerged in "African countries, Australia, Bangladesh, Canada, Caribbean countries, India, Malaysia, Malta, New Zealand, Pakistan, Singapore, South Pacific Island countries, and Sri Lanka" (1991: 2). They write that what unites them:

beyond their special and distinctive regional characteristics is that they emerged in their present form out of the experience of colonization and asserted themselves by foregrounding the tension with the imperial power,

⁷ Hutcheon's essay is in *Past the Last Post*. Mukherjee's essay ("Mimicry and Reinvention") is in a collection edited by Uma Parameswaran, called *The Commonwealth in Canada*. Mukherjee writes: "The Indian writer, the Jamaican, the Nigerian, the Canadian and the Australian, each one knows what it is like to be a peripheral man whose howl dissipates unheard. He knows what it is to suffer absolute emotional and intellectual devaluation, to die unfulfilled and still isolate from the world's centre" (in Hutcheon 1990: 171). Hutcheon goes on to note that the Canadian experience of colonialism should not be equated with these other instances. To do so "is both trivializing of the Third World experience and exaggerated regarding the (white) Canadian" (171).

and by emphasizing their differences from the assumptions of the imperial centre. (2)

The idea of "sameness" is a countervailing impulse which seems to me inescapably present in much the same literature. By sameness I mean those more globalising forces and relations which bind together the First World and the Third, and which align their histories, and direct their fates in tandem. In this sense, to live in the Third World is not so much to inhabit a different world, as it is to inhabit an inverse world, or the reverse face of the First World. The image here is the image of the mirror, as Ngugi uses it (or as Derrida uses it, as we shall see). Later I shall suggest that the particular fate of archaeology in South Africa is in some ways a reflection of the shortcomings of archaeology elsewhere, and especially in the West.

The idea of difference is perhaps easier to discuss, so I begin with some remarks under the heading of "Exploring Difference". My particular interest is in exploring the differences between some recent archaeological theory, and the kinds of objective realities which one encounters in the Third World. I discuss the idea of sameness across three linked contexts: historical, theoretical, and personal. Like so many discussions of theory mine has run away with me, so I have given it a chapter of its own (Chapter Two, "The Problem of Theory"). The remainder of this chapter is divided into three sections. In the first I explore the notion of difference. The second section is a discussion of "sameness" across an historical context, under the heading of "Archaeology and Colonialism". The important topic of the relation between archaeology and the colonial contexts in which it arose in the Third World has begun to attract a literature in its own right, as part of a broader review within anthropology⁸. Here I set out to do two things. The first is to review those sections of the literature which seem to me indispensable for an understanding of the relationship between archaeology and colonialism. First and foremost this means looking at a series of papers published by Bruce Trigger through the 1980s, focussed on North American

⁸. In particular see a number of volumes in the *One World Archaeology* series. *Domination and Resistance* (1989), edited by Daniel Miller, Michael Rowlands and Christopher Tilley, contains useful essays by Larsen ("Orientalism and Near Eastern archaeology") and Rowlands ("The archaeology of colonialism and constituting the African peasantry"). Also see Patricia Rubertone's essay, "Archaeology, colonialism and 17th-century Native America: towards an alternative interpretation", in *Conflict in the Archaeology of Living Traditions* (1989, edited by Robert Layton); and a volume edited by Peter Gathercole and David Lowenthal called *The Politics of the Past* (1990). For the colonial contexts of African archaeology see the essays in Robertshaw's (1990) volume.

archaeology. The second is to explore those aspects of this relationship which are interesting and relevant to the notion of a post-colonial archaeology. In the third section of this chapter I pursue the notion of "sameness", and take the unusual step of writing about myself (this is under the heading of "Archaeology of Self").

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Exploring Difference.

In July 1995 the department of archaeology to which I am attached at the University of Cape Town was visited by Ian Hodder, post-processual archaeology's most articulate proponent. It was an important visit by one of the discipline's foremost practitioners. Hodder came to us as a representative of modernity, speaking to a developing post-processual direction in South African archaeology. As such his fluency and confidence were deeply impressive. For me his visit served to underline a number of points.

The first was the extent and the sophistication of post-processual archaeology's engagement with general social theory in the last two decades. Gone are the days when archaeologists existed in a kind of exile from the other social sciences, doggedly pursuing the positivist objectives of the New Archaeology while related disciplines were abuzz with the ideas of post-structuralism. Arguably the most valuable contribution of post-processual archaeology has been in turning the discipline away from its idiosyncratic development in the 1970s, towards the concerns of the social sciences at large: questions of meaning, representation, textuality, interpretation, and so on. Post-processual archaeologists have been more interested in the idea of reading than their predecessors, and it shows.

Archaeological texts have become more engaging - from the heavy weather of the oeuvre of the New Archaeology, loaded down with a self-consciously technical language, larded with statistics, to reports which are more literary and narrative in emphasis.

In the second place I was reminded of the colonial nature of South African archaeology. As an undergraduate my textbooks were written by Brian Fagan, Colin Renfrew, Paul Bahn, Robert Sharer and Wendy Ashmore. Africa, and never mind South Africa, was seldom mentioned in their pages, other than as an exotic field

location. To my colonial eyes their authors shared a quite unconscious Euro-centrism. Moreover, as students in the 1980s we experienced a double marginalization, by dint of the academic and cultural boycott. Developments seemed to reach us distantly, via books and journals which one felt were already old news by the time they reached our library shelves. One had the sense of eavesdropping on a colloquium which was always happening elsewhere - one imagined in ivy-covered colleges, or seminar rooms on richly endowed American campuses. And now here was Hodder, in the flesh, a visitor from a world which I had previously known only from the pile of reprints in my office.

However, Hodder's visit also served to underline the differences between post-processual archaeology and the kind of archaeology which we need to contemplate in South Africa. These differences stem as much from post-processual archaeology's sense of its own place in the world, as from the objective differences between Britain and South Africa, the First World and the Third.

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Placing Post-Processual Archaeology.

Post-processual archaeology has been pre-eminently an archaeological practice situated in late-capitalist society observed, as it were, from the centre of that society. In its interests, its concerns, its instructive examples, and its understanding of its social role and internal structure it confirms this. Like postmodernism, with which post-processual archaeology has an uneasy relationship, the imaginative universe of the latter has been tied to the industrialised West, and has seldom ventured into the former colonies⁹. In an important concluding section called "Intellectual labour and the socio-political role of the archaeologist" from Shanks and Tilley's *Social Theory and Archaeology* (1987) - itself a key work in the post-processual tradition - the authors write of "Placing academic archaeology firmly within its social context as a cultural practice in late capitalist society in the West" (205). For them, the discipline's relation to capitalist society is its principle structuring relationship.

⁹. A striking exception is Hodder's early ethnoarchaeological work in Kenya, Zambia and the Sudan (*Symbols in Action*, 1982).

They see this relation being expressed in two ways: on the one hand, traditional archaeology provides a form of legitimation for capitalist society. They write:

It is quite evident that the past may be used for expressing a wide variety of supportive ideas and values for a capitalist society, naturalized and legitimated through an emphasis on tradition and long-term time scales: myths of genius; individuality; patriarchy; humanity's essential economic nature; the universality and inevitability of technological development as progressive; the naturalness of social stability as opposed to contradiction; the inferiority or superiority of certain forms of social organization etc. (205-6)

On the other hand, the forms of organization and structures of capitalist society themselves invade academic archaeology:

At present the academic world all too faithfully mirrors wider social processes in capitalist society with its emphasis on competition between individuals for academic prestige and power in the framework of a hierarchical professional structure; the "ownership" of ideas as if they were equivalent to television sets; pressures to publish; the maintenance of strict disciplinary boundaries hindering understanding; and the often ritualized paying of homage to authority figures in acknowledgements, prefaces, citations and references. (206)

In reaction to this they propose the notion of a "value-committed archaeology", an idea which I return to in Chapter Four ("Archaeology and Social Value"). For the moment what I want to note is that for Shanks and Tilley, even when they are writing as they are here at their most activist and committed, archaeology remains firmly situated as a cultural and intellectual practice in the West.

I have chosen two works for discussion from amongst the spectrum of studies which make up post-processual archaeology, both because they exemplify the innovative direction taken by much of this work, and because, in their different ways, they constitute responses to this sense of situatedness in late-capitalist society. The first is Daniel Miller's *Material Culture and Mass Consumption* (1991), a work written at the point of conjunction between post-processual archaeology and the broader discipline of material culture studies. In this work Miller's project is to affirm the potentially creative powers of the act of consumption - a somewhat quixotic project since, as Miller freely admits, it flies in the face of an established tradition of scholarship which "subscribe[s] to certain blanket assumptions concerning the negative consequences of the growth of material culture", and which have been

responsible for "the emergence of a variety of generally nihilistic and global critiques of "modern" life" (3-4)¹⁰. Faced with the homogenising tendencies of mass culture, individual consumers might take refuge in the potentialities of consumption itself - as a means of proclaiming their individuality, and of claiming the kind of space which society denies them. Moreover, creative consumption can be thought of as a last bastion of proletarian culture, in a society in which "high culture" - the theatre and the arts - are increasingly the preserve of the middle classes.

The home of Miller's imagined community of consumers is the industrialised West, and more particularly Thatcherite Britain. In a passage which both sets the scene and describes his constituency of consumers, Miller takes his readers for a walk: "...imagine walking along one of the streets or corridors of a London council estate". What is immediately striking, writes Miller, is

...the radical difference between the modernist facade of the high-rise flats, with doors painted identical colours by the council, and what lies behind, where each householder has played *bricoleur* with the facilities provided, supplemented by goods purchased on the market.

Moving along the corridor, if flat one may be imagined to hold a single Cypriot divorcee with her children, then two may house a married couple who have moved from Blackpool with the kids and grandparents, flat three a nuclear family born in the area, flat four an elderly retired single male born in Ireland, and flat five a locally born teenager whose parents emigrated from the West Indies.... This diversity is echoed in the furnishing and style of the interior: in one flat, the facilities provided by the council may hardly have been changed; in the next, a mass of jumbled gifts, redundant furnishings which could not quite be thrown away, and items retained for possible future use may be stored without apparent order and filling the space to its limits; in the third, a striking and dominant style may have been imposed: a series of coordinated colours, textures and shapes creating a systematic and deliberate impression of "modernity". (7-8)

All of which affirms, according to Miller, "the very active, fluid and diverse strategies by means of which people transform resources both purchased through the market and allocated by the council into expressive environments, daily routines and often cosmological ideals" - the "*bricolage* of the streets" as he has it (8). Archaeology becomes the study of this neglected area of human experience and action - the

¹⁰. Some of the works in this tradition - by Veblen, Lukacs, Marcuse, and Marx himself - are discussed by Miller.

relation between people and their material environment, which in late-capitalist society we might parse as the potentially liberatory strategies of mass consumption.

A very different response to the role and function of archaeology in contemporary life is provided by Michael Shanks's *Experiencing the Past* (1992). In this work Shanks is writing against, on the one hand, what he identifies as a sterile scholasticism in academic writing about the past, and on the other hand, a prevailing tendency towards the commodification of archaeology and heritage. His particular project is to explore the emotive and affective aspects of archaeological experience: "I want to consider all dimensions of archaeological experience, not just the intellectual or the cognitive". This is "...part of a project of embodiment, of locating the practices and pleasures of archaeology not just within the mind but within the body" (1). To this end Shanks fills his text with photographs, sketches, accounts of subjective experiences and personal responses, anecdotes and collages; straining, as it were, against the limitations of the textual form itself. Shanks's work constitutes a kind of frontal attack on the format of the conventional archaeological report; which he accuses of being dry and unadventurous, hiding an often considerable degree of subjectivity behind a front of science.

In a section called "Experience and (post)modernity", in which he discusses experiences of the past in contemporary society, Shanks writes: "The experience of (post)modernity is of process and change, dislocation, as traditional coherence and meaning are supplanted by the logic of the market which says anything can be bought; everything becomes the same with the common denominator of money". Archaeology and heritage themselves become tied into this cycle: "Both can supply images and meanings which can be used as commodities to feed this nexus of capital and commercial interest". However, this need not be the case, and Shanks is concerned to argue for an "authentic use of the material past... in constructing cultural identities". He writes:

Real differences, identities, and genuine pasts can be ascertained on the basis of criteria which are not part of economic growth and capital accumulation. Fragmented postmodern experience is not total, having supplanted all others. It may be the "rush" of experience of [a] New York city executive yuppie, living a 25-hour day, eating in [a] sushi bar, listening to [a] portable compact disc player, dressed in [a] silk Hong Kong suit and Italian shoes and planning the next stock market deal or ski trip. It may even be the experience of French intellectuals who seem to revel in discussions of the postmodern (128).

It is not an experience with which Shanks finds himself in sympathy, however. And against this "atomized experience of abstract information and moments of cultural spectacle" he counterposes "those experiences around which life organizes itself - growing up in the social world, partnership, home, birth and death" - which, borrowing a phrase from Lefebvre, he calls "a poetry of the life-world". In other words, what Shanks offers as an answer to the alienating character of late-capitalist life is a retreat into subjectivity; into a poetic and idiosyncratic appreciation of the past, and a politics organized around personal experience. Shanks's sense of the present moment leads him to withdraw into the self, and even further than the self, into the body.

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Confronting the Third World.

It need hardly be said that the context in which one lives and works as an archaeologist in the Third World, and still more as an archaeologist in Africa, is a very different one, demanding of very different reactions. Here the experience is of the inverse face - or, as it might be, of the underbelly - of capitalist development, and of those same processes which make for such a heady sense of profusion when experienced at the centre. To an ever increasing degree ours is a reality conditioned by bearing the social and economic costs of development in the West. Not for us the moments of spectacle and abstract information (the "hyper-reality"), but rather the melancholy themes of under-development, neocolonialism, dependency and indebtedness. One might almost say that the Third World is a territory in which those hoary old grand narratives, apparently so discredited in the West, continue to hold sway: poverty, hunger, death, disease, the daily fight for survival.

We have come to be used to the Third World fulfilling a number of roles and functions in the global division of labour and information: as a source of cheap labour and primary products, as a market for commodities, as a ground on which proxy wars are fought and new weapons-systems tested, as a source of images of famine, as the home of tyrants and petty dictators... But what is both startling and salutary when we look at Africa is the sense of active crisis which now attends the continent - the sense of a situation which is not only grave, but deteriorating sharply. Conditions for

most African countries are significantly worse than they were thirty years ago, and probably at any other point in their past. In an essay called "Confronting the African Tragedy" published in 1994 in the *New Left Review*, Colin Leys, himself a respected Africanist, attempts an honest survey of a situation which clearly alarms him. He writes:

Sub-Saharan Africa became independent roughly thirty years ago, and it is already hard to remember the optimism that African leaders, and most western Africanists, then felt about the future...while departing colonial officers and settlers predicted gloomily that the African leaders would make a mess of things, even they did not doubt that in general, the African ex-colonies were viable; while the African nationalist leaders and their western supporters were confident that with independence their countries' economic growth rates would accelerate and the gap between Africa and the industrial world would be progressively closed.

... We now know that this was a tragic delusion, and that after two "development decades" most people in sub-Saharan Africa are poorer than they were thirty years ago, while a chronic dependence on "aid" has made a mockery of their countries' formal sovereignty. What has yet to penetrate the consciousness of most people, however, is that this is not just a disappointment: what is happening in Africa is a perhaps irreversible decline towards that capitalism-produced barbarism of which Rosa Luxemburg warned, gradually engulfing most of the sub-continent.

It is hard to convey this appropriately. What it comes down to is that in sub-Saharan Africa most people are facing a future in which not even bare survival is assured: to use Andre Gorz's term, they are being made into "supernumeraries" of the human race. Out of a total population of about five hundred million, nearly three hundred million are already living in absolute poverty, and it is getting worse. Per capita incomes have been falling at over 2 per cent a year since 1980, and there is no obvious prospect that this will be reversed in the foreseeable future. World demand for what sub-Saharan Africa produces is growing slowly or even declining, while world supplies are being constantly expanded(to a significant degree, at the World Bank's urging)...

Meanwhile, the scramble for whatever surplus is still extracted from the direct producers through taxation has reached crisis proportions; corruption has drained the African states of their efficiency and legitimacy. Obscenely vast fortunes have been siphoned from public treasuries into private bank accounts... while the apparatus of government decays. Roads have become largely impassable. When crops fail people die because there are no longer any food reserves or delivery systems, and when people fall ill they die because there are no longer any doctors or nurses or medicines to be had except on the black market, which is beyond most people's reach.

... And then there is the grotesque charade of Africa's debt, now the highest in the world as a proportion of GDP. No one imagines it can ever be repaid; but the creditors adamantly resist writing it off. The result is an endless (and expensive) process of recycling, new loans being made to permit the continued payment of interest on old ones. Some African countries are currently spending more than half of all their export earnings on servicing foreign debts, and in some recent years the flow of capital from Africa to the west has almost equalled the flow of new capital to Africa... In effect, Africa now represents a form of debt peonage on a continental scale.

The net result is increasing social disintegration, accelerated and made more dramatic and violent by superpower-fostered militarization (Ethiopia, Eritrea, Somalia), sometimes aggravated by white settler intransigence (Zimbabwe, Namibia, Mozambique, Angola), but hardly less catastrophic elsewhere - in Liberia, for example, or Uganda, or Sudan, or the Central African Republic, or Zaire, or Burundi. In fact it is getting hard to find African countries where the infrastructure is not deteriorating to the point of collapse, where corruption and extortion are not taken for granted, where violent city crime is not endemic, where malnutrition and rising morbidity rates are not widespread. (33-36)¹¹

The question that Leys sets out to address is *why* this should have happened - a question which, as we might expect, has engaged the attention of a number of Africanists of late. He briefly (and critically) discusses two of these works, Basil Davidson's *The Black Man's Burden* (1992), and Jean-Francois Bayart's *The State in Africa* (1992), before giving his own view based on economic history. Leys argues that the key to the failure of development in Africa after independence lay in the earlier failure of the colonial regimes to transform the relations of production in the territories they controlled: "To a very large extent, household production of commodities replaced household production for subsistence and local exchange, and that was all... the result was to destroy the precolonial economies and the social

¹¹. The economic challenges facing post-apartheid South Africa are no less formidable. A review of the 1995 budget published in the *Weekly Mail and Guardian* (March 17 to 23, 1995, "Long walk to prosperity") reports that South Africa is "still a land of inequality". It remains "one of the most unequal nations in the world with regard to income distribution" (8). The statistics paint a stark picture: Africans earn a *per capita* disposable income on average 13 percent of that earned by whites. More than a quarter of South African children experience stunted growth as a result of malnutrition. The rate of adult illiteracy stands at around 30 percent. While eight out of ten white children reach the final year of schooling, only two out of ten African children reach the same level (source: National Social Development Report presented by President Mandela to the United Nations World Summit on Social Development in Copenhagen, March 1995).

orders based on them, without putting in their place economies or social systems capable of defending themselves against "world market forces" after independence" (45). It is not so much that Africa "got off to a bad start" at independence, as Rene Dumont put it; rather, "the extreme backwardness of its precolonial economies and the limitations of subsequent colonial policy, prevented most of the continent from starting at all on the key transition to self-sustaining capital accumulation after independence".

I have quoted from Leys at length because to a great extent his paper sets the baseline for my own approach to the discipline and its social contexts. In the days when I taught an under-graduate course with the imposing title of "An Introduction to Africa" I used Leys's essay as the final piece of set reading at the end of the twelve weeks. It seemed an appropriate note on which to close a course in which we had ranged from struggle poetry to the tactics of guerilla warfare, and from humanity's origins to debates over women and development.

The point that needs to be made (and I think that it is a point which makes itself) is that this is a context, with its special pressures and priorities, which can make archaeology - that scratching after signs in the face of the earth - seem like the very epitome of an esoteric pursuit. Moreover, it makes a great deal of contemporary writing in archaeology seem impossibly remote, if not actually frivolous - and unfairly so, since Miller's inventive *bricoleurs* and Shanks's sensitive forays into the past belong quite simply to a different world. More importantly, as a general context it forcibly confronts us with a number of questions, issues and concerns not normally addressed in writing emanating from the traditional centres of the discipline, or to which the answers given seem inadequate or inappropriate. What does archaeology have to say to the particular conjunction of deprivations, outlooks and interests - one might almost speak of a "condition" - of living in the Third World? What social value can be attached to the writing of the archaeological past? As archaeological practitioners, how do we even begin to engage with the contexts outlined by Leys?¹²

¹². Andre Odendaal, an historian from the Western Cape, has a nice line on this. In a paper called "Dealing with the Past/Making Deals with the Past: Public History in South Africa in the 1990s" (originally presented at a conference on the "Future of the Past: The Production of History in a Changing South Africa" at the University of the Western Cape, 10-12 June 1996) he writes: "post-modern scholars in South Africa also need to problematise their own approaches, social origins, power locations and agendas. In a country and sub-continent where half the people are uncertain where their next meal is going to come from it can be obscene to reify the relativity of ideas."

What becomes clear is that we cannot simply transplant ideas and practices from the metropolises. The old colonial impulse to uncritically accept whatever carries the stamp of the traditional disciplinary centres needs to be resisted. To fail to resist is to encourage the development of an archaeology which is radically at odds with the society in which it lives and works, schizophrenically divided between a location on the periphery and an intellectual home across the ocean. One of the few works in Anglo-American archaeology to articulate such a notion of difference is, interestingly, by Miller himself. The paper is called "Archaeology and Development" (1980), and it arose out of his experience as an archaeologist to the government of the Solomon Islands between 1976-8. He begins by criticizing a positivist consensus in archaeology which defines the discipline by its internal characteristics ("by its methodology and academic goals"), which are understood as being independent of "the structure of society and the nature of academic discourse". Miller follows Habermas in taking a contrary position in which "an academic discipline cannot be defined except in relation to these issues". He writes:

My concern here is with society as the context within which archaeology takes place and from which archaeology derives meaning. The social context includes the structure of employment, education, the mass media, and people's conceptions of the past and of the uses of the past in the present. It follows from this that where archaeology is employed in societies very different from those in which it originally developed, it may not be able merely to reproduce itself in its old image and expect all the familiar sets of relationships that define it to follow. It may become a different subject, and changes may become necessary in the way in which it is discussed, utilised and judged.
(709)

This suggestive formulation was never taken up in a sustained way in Anglo-American archaeology. Miller went on to situate his own practice at the conceptual centre of late-capitalist society, in, for example, his detailed work on the structures of mass consumption¹³.

There are master narratives in South African (and African) society and these are the search for food, shelter and employment... and scholarship happens within this context" (15).

¹³. In part this is a result of the manner in which Miller develops his argument, which is flawed. See in particular the comments of Joao Morais, Benta Bingen and Paul Sinclair (Department of Archaeology and Anthropology, Eduardo Mondlane University) on the dualism which he develops between "traditional" and "modern"

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Archaeology and Colonialism.

Living in a former colony there is a certain inevitability about associating the development of archaeology locally with the practices and institutions of colonialism. In the first place what might be called the "idea" of archaeology was itself introduced into the Third World by the processes of colonial expansion. A curiosity about antecedents and a sense of history as it is represented in the material objects of the past seems to be fairly general to human societies around the world. Pierre de Maret, for example, reports "a devotion to the past" among the majority of sub-Saharan African people (in his essay on the archaeology of Central Africa, in Robertshaw ed. 1990:111). This interest extends to the material relics of the past: "oral traditions provide numerous examples of a relationship between material relics of the past and the history of a people". He continues:

Anxious to install mythical lands within the topography of territory familiar to his audience, a narrator frequently made reference to particular places, for example the dwelling place of an ancient king. For recent times, these locations seem to be very precise, but for older periods, it is often an iconotrophic process, whereby a site is fed back into tradition... Accidental discoveries of ancient pottery, skeletons or smelting furnaces are thus integrated into a story. (111)¹⁴

sectors of the society in so-called developing countries (*Current Anthropology* 21(6): 715-6, 1980).

¹⁴. Also see A. Gidiri ("Imperialism and Archaeology"), who writes: "All peoples and civilizations throughout history have tried in a variety of ways to discover and explain their origins, to possess and interpret their past. Usually this endeavour was part of an attempt less to project the future than to arrive at "operational" conclusions for the present. Oral or written myths, legendary accounts of ancestors and creators, epic heroes and heroic chronicles are common features of most cultures. The preservation of ancient idols, of ancestor portraits, the restoration of sacred monuments and the duplication of old and valued objects, even the explanation of strange and curious objects as the handiwork of ancestors or a past race of giants, are familiar practices everywhere" (1974: 436). Gidiri cites as an example the practice of preserving ancestor figures and royal portraits in traditional Yoruba sculpture collections in Nigeria.

Nevertheless, the particular methodologies, paradigms, procedures, and protocols of reportage and display which make up the discipline of archaeology - as opposed to these informal or folk archaeologies - have their origins in a particular conjunction of historical and intellectual contexts in the societies of north-western Europe in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. These include the Enlightenment, the rise of capitalist production, and not least, colonialism itself. The newly constituted discipline of archaeology figured in a complex nexus: a new valuation of the material object associated with the development of capitalist production, a curiosity about antecedents and a new faith in the scientific method, and an alertness to the diversity of human culture and experience revealed in the course of colonial expansion. Its export to other parts of the world took place as part of a more general transfer of goods, technologies and ideas¹⁵.

On the ground, in the colonial states, the relation between colonialism and the development of archaeology could hardly have been more direct. Many of the first archaeological practitioners were themselves employees of the colonial state. Augustin Holl writes that the earliest research reports dealing with archaeological information on West Africa were published between 1870 and 1900:

¹⁵. There are a number of useful recent accounts of the origins of archaeology. These include Trigger's paper on "Anglo-American archaeology" (1981) in which he traces the roots of "scientific prehistoric archaeology" to antiquarianism in Western Europe in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and Enlightenment philosophy. He notes that while Enlightenment philosophers rarely cited archaeological data in support of their theories, they "provided an intellectual framework within which archaeological findings acquired new significance" (139). Andrew Sherratt ("The Relativity of Theory", 1993) writes: "The various practices of archaeology, and the very existence of an entity with a common name, are embedded in expectations about the nature and uses of the past. Consciousness of the existence of a discoverable past, different from the present but nevertheless open to investigation, has been a feature of western societies since the sixteenth century. It arose both from the attempts of European states to establish their own national identities, and from Europeans' encounters with a diversity of other cultures" (119-120). Tilley (in Bapty and Yates eds. 1990) interprets archaeology as a product of modernity (where "Modernism is, of course, part of the social and cultural space of capitalism" 1990: 129). Among the more dated accounts, Clarke 1971 [1968] ("The history of archaeology") sees the Italian Renaissance and the classical revival as the "germinal background for archaeological curiosity" (4). In *One Hundred Years of Archaeology* (1952 [1950]) Daniel writes of the coming of age of the discipline in the 1860s, with the publication of the *Origin of Species* (in 1859) and the authentication of stone axes from the Somme.

At that time, the colonial powers were engaged in surveying their new territories; powerful expeditions were often organized. Many expeditions headed by army officers crossed the Sahara from the north to the south... and from the west to the east, from Dakar to Djibouti. In this process of "pacification", the participants recorded various kinds of information about peoples, languages, customs, geography, geology, traditions and archaeological finds. Thus, it is logical enough that the earliest archaeological reports from West Africa were written by army and medical officers, school teachers and priests, many of them being "enlightened amateurs". (1990: 298)

This was a process in which influence worked in both directions, and Holl notes that: "Many of the people who actively participated in colonialism played an important role in the emergence of French archaeology as a self-contained discipline" (298). De Barros (1990) writes of Francophone West Africa in the years 1900-1940: "During this period, archaeology was conducted by colonial administrators, military officers, civil servants and technical personnel (usually geologists). With few exceptions, these individuals were neither historians nor trained archaeologists" (158). He continues: "Artefact collections were primarily surface finds obtained during military, scientific and mining expeditions or those accidentally uncovered during various colonial construction projects" (158).

In his essay on the archaeology of Central Africa, de Maret (1990) notes that: "The Tervuren archives [in Belgium] attest to the passion for the collection of lithic artefacts and one is struck by the knowledge of prehistory and its specialist vocabulary shown by the officials of the Independent state, as well as by businessmen, engineers and servicemen" (114). In Zimbabwe, some of the earliest archaeological work was conducted by R.N. Hall, an appointee of the imperialist Cecil Rhodes (Garlake, 1982). Bernard Fagg, one of the formative figures in Nigerian archaeology began his career as Assistant District Officer with the Nigerian Administrative Service. His first excavation at Rop Rock Shelter took place in 1944 during his leave from colonial administration (Kense, 1990). Peter Sheppard's admirably concise title for his account of the development of North African archaeology is "Soldiers and Bureaucrats: The Early History of Prehistoric Archaeology in the Maghreb" (1990). Finally, Philip Kohl (1989) notes that:

Rich, Layard, Rawlinson, Petrie, Botha, Place, de Sarzec, Schliemann and Koldewey - the early pioneers of archaeology in the eastern Mediterranean and Mesopotamia, as well as the eminently recondite fields of Assyriology and

Egyptology - were loyal subjects (sometimes even administrators) of the expanding colonial powers... (240)¹⁶

Archaeology appears in this context as one of the forms of scientific enquiry which mediated the encounter between the agents of colonialism and audiences back home, and the unfamiliar people, cultures and territories with which they came into contact. The relation between archaeology and colonialism was the relation between knowledge and power. On the one hand the political and economic processes of colonialism served to open-up new territories for inspection; on the other hand, archaeology provided a powerful form of legitimation for the colonial project itself.

This conjunction of knowledge and power in a colonial setting receives its most famous formulation in Edward Said's *Orientalism*, a work which to a large extent inaugurated the current phase of reflection on the post-colonial. In the context of a discussion of Western hegemony over the Orient, he writes:

In a quite constant way, Orientalism depends for its strategy on this flexible *positional* superiority, which puts the Westerner in a whole series of possible relationships with the Orient without ever losing him the relative upper hand. And why should it have been otherwise, especially during the period of extraordinarily European ascendancy from the late Renaissance to the present? The scientist, the scholar, the missionary, the trader or the soldier was in, or thought about, the Orient because *he could be there*, or could think about it, with very little resistance on the Orient's part. Under the general heading of knowledge of the Orient, and within the general umbrella of Western hegemony over the Orient during the period from the end of the eighteenth century, there emerged a complex Orient suitable for study in the academy, for display in the museum, for reconstruction in the colonial office, for theoretical illustration in anthropological, biological, linguistic, racial and historical theses about mankind and the universe, for instances of economic and sociological theories of development, revolution, cultural personality, national or religious character. (in Williams and Chrisman, 1993: 134)

In their commentary on Said, Williams and Chrisman write: "In the context of *Orientalism*, Western power, especially the power to enter or examine other countries at will, enables the production of a range of knowledges about other cultures. Such knowledge in turn enables (legitimizes, underwrites) the deployment of Western power in those other countries". Or, in their succinct formulation: "The

¹⁶ This is in an essay called "The material culture of the modern era in the ancient Orient: suggestions for future work", in *Domination and Resistance*.

Enlightenment's universalising will to knowledge (for better or worse) feeds Orientalism's will to power" (1993: 8).

The catalogue of archaeological justifications of colonialism is a long and, by now, well-established one. Trigger describes the relationship between colonialism and the developing discipline of archaeology in North America in two essays, "Archaeology and the Image of the American Indian" (1980) and "Prehistoric Archaeology and American Society" (1986). His most complete account of archaeology in the use of colonial interests is in chapter four of *A History of Archaeological Thought* (1989). In the context of Southern African archaeology, Peter Garlake's essay "Prehistory and Ideology in Zimbabwe" (1982) is essential reading, as are Martin Hall's two essays on the historiography of the Iron Age, "The Burden of Tribalism: The social context of Southern African Iron Age Studies" (1984), and "'Hidden Histories': Iron Age Archaeology in Southern Africa" (1990).

However, rather than give the details of this history here (I shall do so later), I want to go on to make two points which are not usually made in this kind of discussion, and which have a more immediate relevance for the notion of a post-colonial archaeology. The first point is that the experience of colonialism was a key formative context for the discipline as a whole, metropolitan as much as colonialist archaeologies. The second point is that the legacy of this experience is still with us - or, if you like, that archaeology continues to be informed by a kind of colonial consciousness. By this I do not only mean the land-rovers and the khakis, and the trips to wild places - important as these icons may be - but the guiding ideas, the assumptive and conceptual frameworks, and the set of practices and work relations which make up the discipline, all of which bear the imprint of archaeology's colonial past. Let me state it plainly: *Colonialism - as a political and economic system, as a way of conceptualising the world, as a working environment, and as an intellectual milieu and territory of the imagination - has to a very great extent been the ground upon which the discipline of archaeology has constructed its understandings of culture and society, worked out the details of its practice, and formulated its sense of mission and purpose.*

As a way of developing these assertions I shall explore them in relation to two areas of archaeological theory and practice. The first is debates about culture and evolution, and the second is debates about the acquisition and ownership of archaeological materials.

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I. Culture and Evolution.

The emergent discipline of archaeology played its part in mediating the colonial encounter in at least three different ways. Firstly, in a synecdochic fashion, whereby goods and artefacts returned to Europe stood in for the non-Western groups whose material culture they constituted. In this connection Miller (1987) notes that:

At the period of the nineteenth century when the discipline of anthropology was coming into being, material culture studies represented the very core of this emerging social science... Both to armchair academics, and, through museum displays, to the population as a whole, objects were representative of the peoples of distant cultures. (110)

Secondly, by signalling conquest and proprietorship. For example, Trigger (1986) notes of North American archaeology that:

just as ethnographic material was displayed to the Euro-American public in museums as trophies appropriated from conquered peoples, the exhibition of prehistoric artefacts symbolized white control of the soil from which these objects were recovered. (193)

Thirdly, via a trope which linked distance in space with distance in historical time. In terms of this trope, articulated in the doctrine of cultural evolution, encounters with technologically primitive groups in distant parts of the world figured as encounters with Europe's own prehistory. In a cleverly conceived essay called "Ancestors and agendas" (1993) Clive Gamble notes that: "The world and its peoples have always provided a rich source of material for the West to reflect on its uniqueness and peculiar global position. This is brought home with great clarity in the transfer during the last century of remoteness from Paris and London into remoteness in time" (42). He quotes Degerando's advice to the Pacific explorer Baudin in 1800 ("one of the foundation texts of anthropology"), that on his voyage:

We shall be taken back to the first periods of our own history; we shall be able to set up secure experiments on the origin and generation of ideas, on the formation and development of language, and on the relations between these

two processes. *The philosophical traveller, sailing to the ends of the earth, is in fact travelling in time; he is exploring the past; every step he makes is the passage of an age. Those unknown islands that he reaches are for him the cradle of human society.* (quoted in Gamble 1993: 43; emphasis by Gamble)¹⁷

In this way, in the second part of the nineteenth-century cultural evolution became the key organizing idea linking the ethnographic and archaeological material to ideas about progress and Europe's conception of its own place in history, and to the practices of colonial conquest and administration.

The Imperial Synthesis.

More than any other archaeologist, Bruce Trigger has made a project of exploring the effects of cultural evolutionist thinking on the development of the discipline. In a string of publications through the 1980s he enlarges on this theme. In "Anglo-American Archaeology" (1981) he describes how British and American archaeology came to be organised around cultural evolutionist precepts in the second half of the nineteenth century. This turn to cultural evolutionism has its roots in the abandonment of the doctrine of psychic unity as part of "a growing emphasis on biological explanations of cultural differences that became fashionable across Europe after 1850" (142)¹⁸. Archaeologists "argued in Darwinian fashion that biological inequality had come about gradually as a result of natural selection operating to improve the intellect and temperament of peoples whose cultures were changing, while leaving those with static cultures in a primitive condition" - a thesis which meshed well with the imperial ambitions of the European powers.

Biological explanations of cultural difference had been prevalent in North American society, with its long history of colonial contact, for some time. The rise of cultural

¹⁷. This is from a translation by F.C.T. Moore (1969), called *The Observation of Savage Peoples by Joseph-Marie Degerando (1800)* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul).

¹⁸. In *A History of Archaeological Thought* (1989), Trigger attributes this to a new conservatism in Europe as a result of the Napoleonic conquests, and the restoration of conservative regimes in France, Germany and Italy in the wake of his defeat: "In place of the rationalism of the Enlightenment, this new conservatism favoured a romantic idealization of national and ethnic differences. This encouraged intellectuals to view alleged national characteristics as being rooted in biological disparities between human groups" (111).

evolutionism in Europe and its export to North America in the second half of the nineteenth century had the effect of reinforcing these ideas: "Thus British and American archaeologists... came to share a common view of cultural evolution, which treated progress as indissolubly associated with the history of European populations and lacking to varying degrees among peoples elsewhere in the world" (144).

Trigger draws attention to the particular influence of the British prehistorian John Lubbock (later Lord Avebury) in popularising cultural evolutionism, and establishing it as the dominant paradigm in the discipline in this period. He returns to this point in a section of his major work, *A History of Archaeological Thought* (1989), called "The Imperial Synthesis". Lubbock grew up as a neighbour of Charles Darwin, and it was as an early supporter of his theory of evolution that he began to study prehistoric archaeology. His book *Prehistoric Times* "was almost certainly the most influential work dealing with archaeology published during the nineteenth century" (114). It went through seven editions between 1865 and 1913 and was a standard work in both Britain and the United States.

At first glance the book "appears to be a curious collection of disparate material" (115). Lubbock's method was to juxtapose discussion of archaeological topics with sketches of the way of life of contemporary tribal societies, which he believed would shed light on the behaviour of prehistoric groups. He was "deeply committed to the idea of unilinear cultural evolution", not in itself an original position: "What was new was his Darwinian insistence that as a result of natural selection human groups had become different from each other not only culturally but also in their biological capacities to utilise culture" (116).

Lubbock viewed modern Europeans as the product of an intensive process of cultural and biological evolution. He argued that technologically less advanced people were not only culturally, but also intellectually and emotionally more primitive than civilized ones. He also argued that as a result of the differential operation of natural selection among Europeans, the lower classes and the criminally inclined were biologically inferior to the more successful middle and upper classes: "Thus a single explanation accounted for social inequality in Western societies and for the alleged superiority of European societies over other human groups" (116). To reinforce an evolutionary perspective and to counter Romantic idealisation of the primitive "he went out of his way to portray primitive peoples as invariably few in number, wretched and depraved". They were said to have child-like intellects, to be slaves to their passions,

and to be deficient in moral sense: "To demonstrate their lack of routine Victorian values, he also emphasized their dirtiness" (116-7).

Trigger comments: "His views of native peoples justified British colonization and the establishment of political and economic control abroad on the grounds that they promoted the general progress of the human species. He also absolved British and American settlers of much of the moral responsibility for the rapid decline of native peoples in North America, Australia, and the Pacific" (117-8). These populations were vanishing not because of colonial aggression, but because natural selection had not equipped them to survive as civilization spread. Colonialism was made to appear less a political act, than a consequence of cultural evolution: "Whether dealing with the working classes of Britain or with native peoples abroad, social Darwinism transferred human inequality from the political to the natural realm by explaining it as a consequence of biological differences" (118).

The doctrine of cultural evolution had a number of significant effects on the discipline of archaeology as it developed through the latter part of the nineteenth century. It served to entrench the idea that non-Western groups were inherently unprogressive and their cultures marked by stasis - or in a common formulation, that they were without history. In a ground-breaking paper from 1980 called "Archaeology and the Image of the American Indian" Trigger catalogues the effects of this view of Native American cultures on the interpretation of archaeological data prior to 1914. It led to "a general lack of concern with cultural change on a lesser scale than from one major cultural stage to the next" (664). In the United States the systematic study of cultural variation was orientated primarily towards defining geographical rather than chronological patterns. An ethnic paradigm took root, with the tendency to see individual cultural patterns "as the exclusive possessions of particular peoples" (665), rather than stages in a developmental sequence.

Evidence of change in the archaeological record was interpreted as resulting from the "movements of people [rather] than from alterations within individual cultures". In some cases this led to the propagation of absurdities. Because it was believed that native groups were incapable of major developmental changes, where "evidence indicated that different, and apparently more complex, cultures had flourished in prehistoric times", these were attributed to non-native groups. Trigger describes the

case of the "Mound Builders", a mythical non-Indian race said to have been responsible for the monumental burial mounds in the midwestern United States¹⁹.

Secondly, it resulted in a dichotomy between the social sciences in general and anthropology, which "became the study of peoples who were believed to be unchanging" (Trigger 1986: 189, "Prehistoric Archaeology and American Society"). Trigger notes that the assumed lack of internal development among native societies meant that it was assumed to be a relatively simple matter "to use ethnographic data concerning tribes that had lived in a region in historic times to explain prehistoric archaeological data", provided there had been no major population shifts (1980: 665). In practice this led to a conflation of archaeology with ethnology.

Significantly, the abandonment of cultural evolutionism as the organising paradigm in archaeology predates the general discrediting of racial theory in the wake of the Second World War, and was the result of internal shifts in the discipline. The growing political importance of nationalism in Europe at the close of the nineteenth century had created a renewed interest in cultural chronologies. This resulted in the culture-historical approach in British archaeology, and in what Trigger calls the "Classificatory-Historical period" in the United States (1980: 666). Both approaches involved a rejection of unilinear evolution, and an increasing emphasis on inductive and historical approaches. The notion of the archaeological culture became the dominant organising idea in the discipline: archaeological cultures "formed the basis of spatio-temporal mosaics which replaced evolutionary stages as the basic framework of archaeology" (667). At the same time there was a turning away from ethnography, as attempts to define regional cultural chronologies involved a closer focus on the formal aspects of material culture.

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Neo-evolutionism in Archaeology.

¹⁹. The Mound Builder myths have an exact parallel in the history of interpretation of the site of Great Zimbabwe in Southern Africa. Settler archaeologists and historians went to great lengths to prove the non-indigenous origins of the ruins. The Sabaeans, the Phoenicians, the Arabs and the Queen of Sheba, have all been put forward as candidates for their construction. What is surprising in this case is the recent date of such assertions, some of them dating from the 1970s.

It would be tempting at this juncture to treat the doctrine of cultural evolution as an historical phenomenon, simply a phase in the development of the discipline. However, the point that needs to be emphasised with regard to cultural evolutionist thinking is that it persists, and in certain respects continues to inform archaeological thinking at a deep level. Martin Hall puts this rather well when he notes that although it is generally recognized that such theories are untenable, and closely linked with assumptions of racial superiority and inferiority, "many of the nineteenth century concepts that formed part of social evolution are still in circulation, sliding around like unstowed cargo, and causing a good deal of damage" (pers. comm. 1996).

Trigger cites the example of the economic historian George T. Hunt who, writing in 1940, dismissed population movements in prehistory as the "slow flux of native population, the advance and recession of tribes and cultures, which is always found in and is perhaps an inevitable characteristic of aboriginal life on a large and thinly populated continent" (reported in Trigger 1980: 665). My own favourite instance of the kind of off-hand cultural supremacism of Hunt comes from a paper in *Antiquity* on "The Training of Archaeologists" (reprinted in the *Southern African Archaeological Bulletin*, SAAB 2, 1947). This is because it deals with archaeologists as they see themselves. The paper begins by drawing attention to the "crying need in the sphere of archaeology all over the world, and particularly to those still quite extensive regions which are under British Government" (SAAB 2, 1947: 97). It talks of the need to create posts in archaeology in the Sudan, Eritrea, Somalia, Kenya, and Nigeria; and of the need to train local practitioners to fill them. It continues:

But one might go even further back, emphasizing the fact that "new" countries are only new to us Europeans; they have had their own history which can only be discovered and recreated by digging and other archaeological techniques, which we can and should teach them... Under proper direction, primitive peoples can do archaeological work. Not all will respond, of course, but some will, and they will become the nucleus for the training of others.

However, the real resurgence of cultural evolutionist thinking has taken place in a quite different context, in the neo-evolutionist views which became popular in Americanist archaeology in the 1960s. Trigger has been sharply critical of the New Archaeology on the grounds that it represents a return to semi-respectability of these nineteenth century precepts. He notes that the advent of the New Archaeology signalled a shift from chronological and descriptive objectives to understanding the

dynamics of internal change. This encouraged a return to ethnographic research, concerned with establishing regularities relating to material culture:

"Ethnoarchaeological research of this sort has brought a larger number of archaeologists into contact with living native peoples than ever before" (1980: 670). However, any potentially beneficial effects that might have accrued from this renewed contact have been undone by a conception of ultimate aims which sees archaeology's role as being "to produce universally valid generalizations... that might be claimed to be of practical value for the improvement and management of contemporary societies" (1980: 671).

In so doing, "archaeologists have chosen to use data concerning the native peoples of North America for ends that have no special relevance to these people". Instead, they are used "in a clinical manner to test hypotheses that intrigue professional anthropologists and to produce knowledge that is justified as serving the broader interests of Euroamerican society" (1980: 671). One effect of this "emotionally detached and ahistorical attitude" is "Euroamerican archaeology's continuing alienation from the native people's whose cultural and physical remains are being studied". Trigger writes:

Viewing the Indian's past as a convenient laboratory for testing general hypotheses about sociocultural development and human behaviour may be simply a more intellectualized manifestation of the lack of sympathetic concern for native peoples that in the past has permitted archaeologists to disparage their cultural achievements, excavate their cemeteries, and display Indian skeletons in museums without taking thought for the feelings of living native peoples. (1980: 671)

The result is "a moral as well as a legal crisis for many archaeologists" (1980: 670) which the discipline shows little sign of resolving. In "Prehistoric Archaeology and American Society" (1986) Trigger writes: "in its neoevolutionary orientation, processual archaeology bears a close resemblance to the unilinear evolutionism of the 19th century". As a result, "most processual archaeologists remain as spiritually alienated from Native Americans as their predecessors had been in the 19th century" (201). In the chapter headed "Neo-evolutionism and the New Archaeology" in *A History of Archaeological Thought* (1989), Trigger writes:

The neo-evolutionism that developed in the United States in the 1960s was yet another attempt by anthropologists living in a politically dominant country to "naturalize" their situation by demonstrating it to be the inevitable outcome

of an evolutionary process that allowed human beings to acquire a greater control over their environment and a greater freedom from nature. (289)

My own example is taken from a journal of African archaeology called the *African Archaeological Review*. In the first volume (1983) John Atherton writes enthusiastically of what he calls "living archaeology" in Africa. He writes: "In many areas of Africa, Western influence on material culture remains very limited and much information can be gleaned by the participant-observer" (77). And then, somewhat hyperbolically: "While information is lost with the passing of each African elder, it is still possible in most parts of Africa to preserve an enormous amount of data pertinent to traditional material culture" (93).

Atherton's paper and others like it prompted a response in the form of an editorial to volume seven of the *Review* (1989), written by David Phillipson. Phillipson, who calls his editorial "The ethnographic present is past", finds it necessary to warn against the tendency to uncritically treat Africa as a site of ethnoarchaeological study. He writes:

Archaeologists of Africa rightly pay considerable attention to the economy, socio-political organisation, belief-systems and life-style of the continent's recent populations... [believing that they] may offer archaeologists useful insights into possible ancient life-styles, not only in Africa, but also in other parts of the world. (1)

But, he continues: "Herein lies an insidious danger... The opinions of such scholars

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which ignores the major economic and social changes that have taken place in many parts of Africa during recent decades". This leads them to "present such attempted reconstructions of traditional practices in the present tense, often tied to "tribal" designations". He notes that: "This use of an "ethnographic present" may be traced back to a time when many ethnographers and social anthropologists disclaimed interest in diachronic processes... we should banish the "ethnographic present" as intangible, misleading and, above all, past" (1).

In an equally trenchant critique of ethnoarchaeology published in the succeeding volume of the *African Archaeological Review* (8, 1990) E. Kofi Agorsah notes that: "Africa has been designated the laboratory or testing ground for ethnoarchaeological ideas that have been generated elsewhere" (191). He usefully problematises the notion of ethnicity itself - rather than being a timeless construct, he emphasises its

"fluidity and multidimensionality". He writes that ethnoarchaeology in Africa needs to be "rescued from the obsessive study of only the so-called foraging groups. The subject of the sub-discipline should be both modern and traditional societies" (203).

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Lost Tribes and Lost Cities.

Underlying these contemporary approaches to archaeology has been the old cultural evolutionist idea that by travelling to the far-flung regions of the earth one might catch a glimpse of Europe's own prehistory. It is an attempt by some archaeologists to turn the clock back, to cheat the processes of time itself by pretending that the past is not irrevocably beyond recall. More significantly, perhaps, in popular culture in the West the hunger for images of primitiveness remains unabated - indeed, there are signs that it is on the increase. A new cultural industry, so-called "ethno-tourism", caters to this market. I shall describe two local examples. The first comes from a private game reserve in the Cedarberg mountains 260 kilometres north of Cape Town, which has become home to a group of "authentic Bushmen" - hence the name, Kagga Kamma, the "Place of the Bushmen". Although these mountains were once freely populated by hunter-gatherers, no Bushmen have lived there autonomously for more than a hundred years. The group on Kagga Kamma were resettled from the Northern Cape to create what the white owners of the farm have billed as a "living museum".

The following account is taken from an essay by Barbara Buntman called "Bushman Images in South African Tourist Advertising: The Case of Kagga Kamma" (1996)²⁰. She writes of the tourist experience that it: "offer[s] tourists the opportunity to explore their personal interest in the experience of otherness, satisfy a desire to witness difference and indulge in curiosity about the way other people live their lives" (273). She describes a typical encounter at Kagga Kamma: The tourists assemble in a bar-lounge where they are briefed by the resident "anthropologist" (the quotation marks are Buntman's). From there they are driven the short distance to a pre-arranged meeting place. Their first glimpse is of a grass-roofed structure which serves as a curio shop, and when it is not being pressed into tourist use as a school for the

²⁰ In a volume edited by Pippa Skotnes called *Miscast; Negotiating the Presence of the Bushmen*.

Bushman children. The group of Bushmen are waiting under a rock overhang. They are seated on the floor, and arranged in a semi-circle facing them are tree-stumps for the visitors to sit on. The women are bare-breasted, and men and women wear skins and beads which have been crafted for the purposes of tourist display. Conversation is usually slow to begin with, and the guide/anthropologist takes the lead. Depending on the dynamics, people may break into smaller groups resulting in the possibility of more animated discussion. The Bushmen are encouraged to answer questions about lifestyle, subsistence, hunting, details of personal adornment, worldview, and so on. Since many of these questions are alien to their own life experience the answers are necessarily fictionalised. Buntman writes, although the occasion offers the possibility of "friendly communication and interchange", the Bushmen:

are not demystified; in fact, as the tourists embark upon a search for authenticity, the aura of difference is heightened. The management of this resort utilises a common desire people have to see and experience the unique and exotic "other". (278)

In fact, at approximately R1000 per day the experience is beyond the reach of most South Africans. Instead the management of Kagga Kamma has tapped into a lucrative foreign tourist market. So successful has this been that they reportedly run a full-time marketing office in Germany (Mark McAdam, pers. comm.). Buntman writes:

Bushman people have moved from a hunter-gatherer Late Stone Age society to that of the underclass of the Third World, where their status ranges from isolates and curiosities, to marginalised, denigrated and seemingly unwanted people. (279)

She writes: at Kagga Kamma "the visitor remains enlightened, liberal and "civilized" whilst the Bushmen are presented as ethnically and culturally pure so-called "primitives"" (279). They are "misrepresented as part of nature". Not only is this "a patronising and disempowering process", but it fails to recognize the realities of their lives - or, indeed, of the lives of the people who view them²¹.

²¹. Also see Hylton White's account *In the Tradition of the Forefathers. Bushman Traditionality at Kagga Kamma; The politics and history of a performative identity* (1995). White introduces an added level of complexity by emphasizing the complicity of the Bushmen themselves in the production of images of Bushman-ness and primitiveness. Their motivation is partly financial, but also partly a desire to assert a version of Bushman identity which sets them apart from other groups. He quotes the

My second example comes from somewhat further to the North, from what used to be the apartheid "homeland" of Bophutatswana, where an international hotel group has constructed an ambitious hotel complex with an archaeological theme, the so-called "Lost City". Designed by the California-based resort designers, Wimberley, Allison, Tong and Goo, the resort, which has been modelled to resemble an incompletely reconstructed archaeological ruin, represents an interesting conflation of the patina of antiquity with a kind of post-modern glitz. The scale of the complex is staggering. At a cost of around 300 million dollars it is one of the most expensive single resorts ever built. It has 338 rooms for guests, restaurants, cinemas, a casino, and a "massive water park open to 5000 day trippers". The special effects which form an integral part of the architecture are "imported from Hollywood", and include a nightly volcanic eruption during which the carved stone "Bridge of Time" rumbles and shakes, the eyes of a stone leopard sitting high above the bridge flash, and steam issues from between the rocks nearby. Architectural features include the King's tower, and the "Kong Gates" of the city, surmounted by a stone gorilla.

This extraordinary construction is described by Martin Hall, in a paper titled with characteristic *brio*, "The Legend of the Lost City: Or, the Man with Golden Balls" (1995). He begins: "In the midst of the dusty, rural poverty of South Africa's Northern Transvaal, once the apartheid homeland of Bophutatswana, an international hotel group has constructed an archaeological site" (179). Hall describes the complex as "a postmodern architectural dream". Part "Enchanted Ruin", and part pleasure-palace, the appeal of the Lost City feeds off the archaeological themes of antiquity and discovery, and the cultural evolutionist theme of savage Africa. He writes: "the attraction to the three million day visitors anticipated each year, apart from the casino, strip-shows and bars, is the picturesque decay and patina, cracked walls and crumbling icons of the archaeological site" (181).

Hall's attention in the paper is taken by the narrative which frames the hotel complex, and which contextualises it in a popular imagery of Africa, the "Legend of the Lost City". This is a wholly spurious tale of an ancient civilization founded by a wandering tribe from the North, which is destroyed by an earthquake, and rebuilt some "three hundred centuries" later in its present form. The ancient civilization's re-creator is Sol

Kagga Kamma Bushman leader, Dawid Kruiper: "I am an animal of nature. I want people to see me and know who I am. The only way our tradition and way of life can survive is to live in the memory of the people who see us" (17).

Kerzner, chairman of the Sun International hotel chain, and the eponymous "Man with Golden Balls". Hall sets out to situate the Legend of the Lost City in an established colonial mythology of Africa, which embraces the Biblical stories of the Queen of Sheba, the myth of Prestor John, Victorian novelists like Henry Rider Haggard, interpretations of the site of Great Zimbabwe, and the phenomenally successful contemporary novelist, Wilbur Smith. Far from being an innocent romantic tale, or "a Californian fantasy", the Legend of the Lost City "is a master narrative that structures a cultural politics of Africa" (181). Hall writes: "The rebirth of the Legend in the glitz and ersatz of the modern pleasure-palace takes the old ideology of colonialism into the twenty-first century" (181). Ultimately, what impresses is the canny commercialism of the venture. The Legend of the Lost City "rests on a deep and wide foundation of popular mythology" (196), which goes a long way towards guaranteeing its commercial success.

What interests me in all of this is the desire which motivates these forms of leisure behaviour. One of the aspects of our own (post) modernity would appear to be the need to revisit and rehearse the stages of our own imagined cultural evolution - to indulge, as it were, in the dubious pleasures of regression. In this connection, the novelist Chinua Achebe writes in a celebrated essay called "An Image of Africa: Racism in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*" (1989), of "the desire - one might even say the need - in Western psychology to set Africa up as a foil to Europe, as a place of negations at once remote and vaguely familiar, in comparison with which Europe's own state of grace will be manifest" (2). In this respect, *Heart of Darkness* "better than any other work that I know displays that Western desire and need that I have just referred to" (2). In a passage which opened up doors for me in understanding this phenomenon, he writes:

For reasons which can certainly use close psychological inquiry, the West seems to suffer deep anxieties about the precariousness of its civilization and to have a need for constant reassurance by comparison with Africa. If Europe, advancing in civilization, could cast a backward glance periodically at Africa trapped in primordial barbarity it could say with faith and feeling: There go I but for the grace of God. Africa is to Europe as the picture is to Dorian Gray - a carrier on whom the master unloads his physical and moral deformities so that he may go forward, erect and immaculate. (12)²²

²². Achebe's essay is in a collection called *Hopes and Impediments; Selected Essays 1965-1987*. In "The Legend of the Lost City" Hall writes of the appeal of ethnography, that it "opened up the possibility of looking at one's own prehistory, acted out in the present". He continues: "In a closely connected way ethnographic observation also

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II. The Politics of Acquisition.

The second area in which a certain colonialist mindset reveals itself in contemporary archaeology is in debates around the ownership and acquisition of archaeological materials. Archaeology is centrally about material objects, often of a high intrinsic value, so that questions of ownership have never been far from the top of the disciplinary agenda - even if only implicitly, in the form of a sub-text which has shadowed the discipline's public transcript. One of my favourite anecdotes in this regard tells how Heinrich Shliemann's attractive young wife, Sophie, smuggled the gold artefacts of Troy II through Turkish customs beneath the folds of her voluminous skirt²³. What is interesting from an historical perspective is how attitudes towards ownership, shaped in colonial contexts, have persisted in the discipline, and outside it in the world market in antiquities.

Imperialism and Archaeology.

I have selected a paper by A. Gidiri called "Imperialism and Archaeology", published in *Race* 15, 1974. It is that rare thing in Western archaeology: a voice from the Third World, at a comparatively early date, giving a perspective on the archaeological appropriation of heritage remains - a voice at once angry, passionate and committed. A biographical note explains that Gidiri is a teacher of history at the Government College in Hyderabad, India, and at the time of writing was engaged in research at the British Museum and the *Bibliothèque Nationale* in Paris. His paper takes the form of a review of two major archaeological exhibitions in Britain and France in 1972-3, "The Treasures of Tutankhamun" exhibition from the Arab Republic of Egypt, and the exhibition of cultural relics from the People's Republic of China called "The Genius of China". Set in their contexts each of the exhibitions had a political significance. The Chinese exhibition reflected a growing rapprochement between China and the West, following Nixon's visit to China and the signing of the Geneva Peace Agreements.

offered an understanding of the primitive part of the psyche - the dark forces of the past still buried in the personality of the civilized man" (1995: 187).

²³. See Glyn Daniel *The Idea of Prehistory* (1963). This incident is related on page 64.

Similarly, the Tutankhamun exhibition reflected a thaw in Anglo-Egyptian relations in the wake of Suez, and despite the so-called "oil-crisis". Each was impressive in its own way and was a reminder of the considerable cultural achievement in these two different parts of the globe at a very early date.

However, what strikes Gidiri is their differences of approach: "We could say, in fact, that an entire epoch in the history of archaeology and imperialism lies between them" (433). This difference lies not so much in the contents of the exhibitions, as the way in which they were presented and interpreted. In the Tutankhamun exhibition the stress was laid on "the richness of the treasures, the brilliance of the art and the strange fate and history of the pharaoh and his tomb". The *affaire Tutankhamun* was "turned into high art and technicolour epic".

It was as if these important historical treasures were stripped of their particular historical dimension and turned instead into vehicles for the romantic dreams and emotional dramas of Western bourgeois art and literature. (433)

Like the early histories of Africa which were about the history of Europe in Africa, the exhibition presented an account of the discovery of the tomb, refracted through the particular consciousnesses of the modern "heroes", Carter and Carnarvon. Particularly revealing were the silences in the exhibition's text, and the ideological imperatives which underlay them:

No mention was made anywhere of the Egyptian labourers who actually carried out the excavation and who found the vital evidence of the steps which led to the tomb. No connections were drawn between the ancient Egypt of Tutankhamun and the mediaeval and modern Egypt of Mohamed Ali and Nasser. Imperialist "Egyptology" has erected an artificial historical wall between Pharaonic and Ptolemaic Egypt and the Egypt of the Arabo-Islamic period in order to claim the ancient culture as part of its own genealogy. Thus, Carter is described as the "studious and dedicated archaeologist who... gave the world a unique insight into *the cradle of western civilization* - the tomb of Tutankhamun".

Conspicuous in its absence was a history of acquisition - the set of events through which the British Museum came to have its own substantial collection of Egyptian antiquities:

There was total silence about the rich wealth of Egyptian treasures that were pilfered and destroyed as a result of colonial and imperialist depredations. Not

even passing mention was made of Napoleon's military expedition to Egypt with a whole band of scholars intent on looting Egyptian antiquities, nor of the ensuing Franco-British squabble over the spoils which ended with the French defeat in the Battle of the Nile in 1801 and the acquisition of a vast artistic treasure by the British Museum. (434)

Gidiri makes the point that in its inception archaeology was not a disinterested seeking after knowledge and cultural remains: "in its origins, its inherent character and its application, it contains the very same links that we see in the realm of politics and economics - between the rise of capitalism and the rise of colonialism. *In laying its hands on the present of the Third World, European and later American colonialism saw that it must also capture its past*" (1974: 438, emphasis in the original). All too often this meant a literal, physical kind of appropriation, with the trade in heritage and art objects being subsumed under the more general trade in conventional commodities: "The link between the trade in exotic commodities and other forms of wealth turned a vast array of materials such as religious and ritual objects, art treasures, royal regalias and various items of personal or domestic usage, into fair game for colonial brigandage" (438-439).

Museums and private collections ("The Treasure Houses of Imperialism and the Loot of the Centuries", as Gidiri would have it) have played a special role in this history of appropriation:

There is no better record of the extent of colonialist and imperialist sacking of the ancient treasures and cultural relics of the Third World than the huge collections of the museums, art galleries, universities, sale rooms and private collections in Europe and America. (441)

As for the impulse behind this appropriation of archaeological remains, he writes: "In its early stage of expansion, colonialism inherited and developed the barbaric rite of capturing and displaying "on its walls" the national symbols and insignia of peoples defeated in aggressive wars and colonial raids" (449). He suggests: "What the Egyptian and Chinese exhibitions achieved was to throw into bold relief the entire record of such colonialist and imperialist activities with regard to the antiquities and archaeology of the countries of the Third World" (446). Their final lesson is a salutary one: it is "a warning to [the countries of the Third World] to safeguard their antiquarian remains, to preserve the integrity and independence of their archaeological explorations and historical researches".

We may be mistrustful of Gidiri's occasional rhetorical flourishes, and his paper shows its datedness in its uncritical account of communist archaeology in China. Nevertheless, it seems to me genuinely valuable for the perspective which it brings to bear in what has been a largely Eurocentric debate. A defining moment in my own development as an archaeologist was my first visit to the British Museum in London. I remembered Gidiri's words as I walked around the fantastic array of archaeological materials. Here was a virtual history of empire, represented in the captured histories of its colonial territories.

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Deconstructing *Africa 95*.

More recently, many of these same questions and issues were revived in the debate surrounding an extraordinary programme of exhibitions and events organised in Britain under the title of *Africa 95*. It was billed as the biggest festival of African arts to date. At its centre was an exhibition at London's Royal Academy of Arts called "Africa: the Art of a Continent", whose co-patrons were Queen Elizabeth II, Nelson Mandela, and former president Leopold Sedar Senghor, "the grand old man of Senegalese political and cultural thought".

The exhibition displayed 830 works in thirteen large galleries. It included a 4000-year-old alabaster statuette from Egypt, the Lydenburg heads from South Africa (AD 500-700), several rock art panels, an East African hand axe, and "case after case of dramatic wooden carvings from the 19th and 20th centuries". Almost as impressive as the scope of the exhibition was the extent of the controversy which it generated.

One debate concerned the method of display, and the manner in which the exhibition was conceptualized. Barry Hillenbrand (*Time* magazine, 27 November 1995) complained that the artefacts are "stripped of their context. Identifying labels are brief and inconveniently located off to the side of the massive display cases" (59). He quotes the Nigerian sculptor Sokari Douglas Camp as saying: "The Royal Academy show is so colonial... The Academy completely misses how religious and respectful these things are. What makes them wonderful is not their design but their power... The objects are beautiful and the show is awesome, but it is a dead show" (59-60). In response, Tom Phillips, the Royal Academy member responsible for organizing the show, insisted that the Royal Academy is not a museum but an association of artists.

His main consideration was to produce a show of "the fantastic, beautiful and moving things found in Africa" (in Hillenbrand, 1995: 60).

In a separate development the exhibition was attacked by Simon Jenkins, a former editor of the *Times*, as "a mass of diverting junk" (the *Times*, 7 October 1995). In a fascinatingly Victorian statement he chided the academy for "taking the objects of African town and village life and putting them on the walls that have hung Titian and Rembrandt... These works [from Africa] are not in the same class of the "art" of Europe and Asia". In a belated echo of a standard theme in cultural evolutionist writing he gives the opinion that:

The sculptured reliefs of the Nile, the Roman mosaics of Tunisia, the ceramics of Arabic North Africa, the architecture of Mamluk Cairo are patently more accomplished than the work of the African heartland. The craftsmanship is of a higher quality. The designers are able to adopt and adapt the outside influences.

In response Clementine Deliss, the artistic director of Africa 95, calls Jenkin's criticism "blatantly racist". Far from being a cultural and evolutionary backwater, she writes:

Every art student knows the oft told tale of Picasso's 1907 visit to the *Musee du Trocadero*, where he first saw the simple lines of the African statuary that would guide him and others in the formulation of Modernism.

Another source of commentary and comparison came from the work of contemporary African artists. One of the central themes to emerge from an exhibition of contemporary African art at London's Whitechapel Art Gallery was the relation between "traditional" and "modern" forms in this work. Against a Western tendency to look for traditional forms in the work of contemporary African artists, Catherine Lampert, director of the Whitechapel Gallery, said:

They do not work in isolation, any more than European artists do... African artists observe what is going on in art everywhere, The big advantage they have is they can draw from the strong subject matter that is all about them. They are not short on ideas.²⁴

²⁴. Deliss and Lampert are both quoted in Hillenbrand, 1995: 60.

Ultimately, for contemporary artists in Africa the biggest challenge is finding buyers, in a market which prefers its Africa to be redolent of the tribal and the primitive.

However, the real debates were around questions of ownership and acquisition. The South African critic Charlotte Bauer writes that the "issue is not the works themselves... The rub is how they got there" (*Sunday Times*, 18 October 1995). She mentions a nineteenth-century Cameroonian king figure on loan from the Walt Disney African Art Collection in Los Angeles and a statuette of the Angolan Chief Chokwe on loan from the Lisbon museum. According to Bauer:

The impartial labels on the exhibits cannot neutralise sore points about ownership and rights, provenience and proof of purchase: movie moghuls and other wealthy Westerners bought them; slave masters, exploiters and colonial officials simply took them.

Of the 830 exhibits, less than a quarter were borrowed from African museums. The great majority came from Europe and the United States, divided fairly equally between museums and private collections. The awkward compromise decided on by the Academy was to consider separately work which had left the country of origin during its colonial period, from that which had left after independence. This controversy was sharpened in the case of a series of terra-cotta figurines which began to appear near the ancient mud-walled city of Djenne in Mali about 25 years ago. David Sweetman writes that: "These beautiful pieces have rarely been put on display because most of them simply "disappeared" from West Africa, a cause of irritation to the Malian authorities" (the *Independent*, 26 September 1995). Phillips and the Academy, who had access to some of these pieces, decided that the works were so important that they would press ahead, and a number of them were included in the catalogue. Then disaster struck from an unexpected source. The British Museum, custodian of the Elgin Marbles, "suddenly decided to turn game-keeper", and warned that it would withdraw its own pieces if they displayed the terra-cottas, forcing a stand-down by the Academy.

Anthony Appiah draws together some of these questions and issues in his introductory essay to the catalogue from the exhibition, *Africa: The Art of a Continent* (edited by Tom Phillips, 1995) - an essay which he calls "Why Africa? Why Art?". He writes that part of the problem lies in securing the notions of "art" and of "Africa", both of which are recent inventions of a particularly European provenience:

It would never have occurred to most of the Africans in this long history [of human cultural life on the continent] to think that they belonged to a larger human group defined by a shared relationship to the African continent... Only recently has the idea of Africa come to figure importantly in the thinking of many Africans; and those that took up this idea got it, by and large, from European culture. (23)²⁵

The Europeans who colonized Africa thought of the continent as a single place because it was inhabited by a single race. Africa became the name for a cultural stereotype, the "Dark Continent", barbaric and impenetrable. However, in a second development the idea of Africa was taken up by African intellectuals, and used as the basis of an assertion of identity and common purpose. Appiah writes of this latter development: "our ideas of Africa... have now come to be important for many Africans, and thus are now African ideas, too" (24). Significantly, Appiah ends by endorsing the exhibition and the conception which lies behind it. This is from a thoroughly post-modern sense that what draws it together is not the objects, but the viewers: "Maybe what unites [these objects] as African is our decision to see them together, as the products of a single continent; maybe it is we, and not their makers, who have chosen to treat these diverse objects as art" (24). Like many commentators before him he sees the exhibition, finally, as an opportunity to reflect not so much on what it means to be African, as what it means to belong to the West:

What does it teach us about the past of Western culture, that it has had such great difficulty learning to respect many of the art works in this exhibition, because they were African? ... What (more hopefully, perhaps) does it tell us about our cultural present that we have now, for the first time, brought together so many, so marvellous African artefacts not as ethnographic data, not as mere curiosities, but from the particular form of respectful attention we accord to art? How, in short, may we interpret our exhibition itself as part of

²⁵. For a similar discussion in an archaeological context see the section headed "The concept of Africa", in an essay by Rowlands called "The archaeology of colonialism and constituting the African peasantry" (in *Domination and Resistance*, 1989). In a manner recalling Achebe, Rowlands writes: "In their identification of an object called Africa, Europeans experienced a fantasy of fulfilled desire in which the distinction between dream and reality was abolished. As a consequence the dogma emerges that Africa was the epitome of economic backwardness and the antithesis of European economic dynamism... This dual valency of dream and reality, timelessness and backwardness, romanticism and monstrous contempt, still organizes Western popular perceptions of Africa, as well as the consciousness of some of its archaeological and ethno-archaeological practitioners" (264).

the history of our Western culture: a moment in the complex encounter of Europe and her descendant cultures with Africa and hers? (25-26)

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Archaeology of Self.

Archaeologists have seldom been encouraged to write about themselves, other than in the recognized form of the autobiography. My decision to tell a part of my story here has been prompted by two concerns. The first is the post-processual perception that interpretations of the past are ineluctably bound up with the social contexts of the archaeologist who makes them. But the second, and more important, is a post-colonial concern with the politics of identity. That is, the perception that in writing of issues of colonialism, racism and apartheid it becomes necessary to situate my own experience not only in relation to these issues, but also to the experiences of the recent past. One of the enduring themes in the post-colonial literature is a concern with the legitimization of "voice". When I write of the coloniser and the colonised, who is the "us" and who the "them"? By what right do I present myself as an arbiter of the "post-colonial"? And the question of questions in South African society: on which side of apartheid's indelible line do I fall - on the side of the black, or of the white?

One of the best examples of this kind of writing is by Appiah himself. His major work, *In My Father's House: Africa in the Philosophy of Culture* (1992), is a convincing exploration of contemporary themes in cultural politics, written from the particularity of his own experience, and the experience of his family in independent Ghana. Closer to home, a former colleague of mine, the literary critic Brenda Cooper, writes movingly of her own experience in "Liberated Repressions: Escaped Thoughts of a White South African Critic" (1994). She writes: "In this essay I attempt to position myself as a white South African female literary critic of African fiction in order to explore the significance of this positioning" (40). Recalling Appiah's work, she writes:

My childhood and schooling in the parochial small town mediocrity of white, Jewish Port Elizabeth were typical of the mean, misinformed racist society at large. I cannot write a beautiful book "From the Balcony of my Parent's Flat in Summerstrand", overlooking the segregated beach. (40)

Nevertheless, her essay is marked by her refusal as a critic to be bound to a particular subject position because of the accidents of birth and experience, and a determination that in the politics of voice her words carry an equal and deserved weight.

However, the most engaging example of such writing - certainly in an archaeological context - must be Carmel Schrire's *Digging Through Darkness; Chronicles of an Archaeologist* (1995). She begins: "This is a book about the history and consequences of colonialism and racism, seen through the eyes of a colonial-born archaeologist" (1). She continues: "The work falls under the formal rubrics of archaeology, history and anthropology, but its perspectives are every bit as personal as they are academic" (1). This is a mixture of "formality" and "intimacy" which

...deliberately mirrors an interplay reflected in the wider colonial enterprise, for although European expansion swept through the globe with theatrical grandeur, on occasion it was also writ exceedingly small in the lives of those people who endured it. (1)

There follows a series of eight "chronicles" which track aspects of this colonial encounter, in tandem with Schrire's own developing career as an archaeologist, first in Australia, later in Canada and the U.S., and finally on the West Coast of South Africa. In the first ("Chronicle of Childhood") she relates the story of the emigration from Lithuania of her grandfather, Reb Yehuda Leb Schrire. He settled in Cape Town, himself a participant in a broader colonial drama.

Schrire writes of her memories as a child and as a young adult. In the late 1950s she was enrolled as a student at the University of Cape Town, in the then Department of African Studies, under Monica Wilson. In those days the student body was mainly white, "though a few Coloured and black faces swam into view occasionally" (33). This was the period of the passing of the Extension of University Education Act which sought to racially segregate the universities. Monica Wilson and her colleague Jack Simons, then professor of African government and law, led the resistance against the Act.

Schrire was taught briefly by John Goodwin and later by Ray Inskeep. She remembers Goodwin, at this late stage in his life, as being "a disappointed man". She gives an account of the relation between Goodwin and Miles Burkitt which developed out of their grand tour of 1927:

His brilliant insights were snatched from his grasp by his mentor, Miles Burkitt... Goodwin, realizing what had happened, raced Burkitt to the finish, and lost, leaving him with the bitter realization that he was nothing but a colonial, working in the field, for the greater glory of his Cambridge betters. (35)

Subsequent chronicles tell the story of excavations at Oudepost, a colonial site on the Cape West Coast; of a "grisly hobby" that "abounded a century ago, when colonial officials amassed body parts of the same native people they purported to explore and administer" (9); of work on an archaeological site in north Australia; and of the possible meanings of those latter-day "anthropological icons", the Bushmen (in the course of which she visits Kagga Kamma). Interspersed through the chronicles are a series of "fictional" accounts in which Schrire takes the ball of archaeological evidence and runs with it into the territory of the imagination. In fact, Schrire teases on this point: she insists that what she is writing is "historical fiction", and therefore essentially plausible.

Throughout the work Schrire is occupied with a threefold concern. The first is with multivocality, and with accommodating in her text a variety of voices, both invader and native. The second is with weaving into the text the threads of her own experience. Schrire, as a person, is never far away - whether as a narrative voice and authorial presence, or a figure seen in third-person through native eyes, as in Gurraway's story. Her third concern is with reflecting the colonial experience, or at least that small corner of it which comes to her through the excavations of which she is a part. An important subsidiary theme in the work concerns the difficulty of archaeology as a medium and a set of techniques whose end is a narrative account of the past: "For although residues denote interactions and, on occasion, even give them voice, the actual temper of these moments is lost forever" (3). She writes of:

the injustice that while the words of a petty clerk on board ship still echo after three hundred years, not a single thought of the native cattlemen watching from the beach remains for us today. (5)

It is this, finally, which drives her to an exercise of the imagination, and an examination of the self²⁶.

²⁶. See Brenda Cooper and Martin Hall's review of Schrire published as "Dem Bones" in the *Southern African Review of Books* (38, 1995). They write that for Schrire: "The

As for myself, situating my own experience in relation to these themes and ideas means going back to tell a story which was waiting for me at birth, but which I have only recently discovered. It means writing of a time, and a relationship between two people, which I can barely imagine - but which I must try to do, for it has situated me more surely than any other event in my brief history.

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My Grandmother's Story.

My paternal grandmother, Iris Shepherd - a pretty name which tells its own story - is seventy-nine, and still cannot bring herself to talk of these events; as though fifty years of quiet deception had sealed her heart against her former self. So this is necessarily a work of excavation, made up of childhood memories, the images of old photographs, of snippets and stray details. It is unreliable like all autobiography, part reconstruction and part fantasy.

She was born Iris Eaton in Durban, South Africa, in the final year of the 1914 - 1918 war which meant that she would endure another war in early adulthood, not an auspicious time to start life, and she was born Coloured. She has one brother, Arthur, whom I remember. To be Coloured in the inter-war years meant something different to what it came to mean under apartheid. There was a greater fluidity to the patterns of life, a greater social mobility. I believe that my grandmother experienced her Colouredness - to the extent that she was aware of it - as no great burden, as one of the allomorphs of identity, comparable to the Roman Catholic girl in her class and the Jewish shop-keeper on the corner. It was not yet the strait-jacket that it would later become.

They lived to the north of the city in an area called Red Hill, on the wrong side of the slope, facing inland. Under apartheid it would become a "grey area", one of those

fragmentary documents, pot sherds, pipe stems, ruined buildings and dross from meals long ago consumed are spurs to the imagination". Of her cross-over into fiction they write: "This is the book's genius, and its apostasy" (3). They also (correctly, I think) identify J.M. Coetzee's *Dusklands* as a major influence in Schrire's fictionalised accounts (Coetzee himself briefly appears as a character in Schrire's text).

enclaves of mixed habitation that exercised the minds of government bureaucrats. Eventually it would be torn apart, re-modeled as a white area. At that time it was an area of vegetable gardens and small-holdings. Iris speaks of crossing the Umgeni River on the way in to town. This was in the days before the bridge was built and you crossed by boat. You paid the ferry-man a few pence and lifted your parcels out of the water slopping at the bottom of the ferry.

I remember going to Red Hill as a child to visit Arthur's wife, Doris, who is my godmother. This was after Arthur had died, and Doris was living with her mother in a wood and corrugated-iron house. This was the old style of building. The house was raised on pilings to keep it away from the ants and the rot. You passed up some stairs to enter the front door and your footsteps rang hollowly on the wooden floor with nothing beneath it. I remember a dark interior stuffed with furniture and bric-a-brac. I remember a big kitchen with a gleaming table. Doris took me to the garden to show me her special plants. The garden was very green, profuse, in parts deeply shaded. Durban is sub-tropical. In summer the river is tepid, sharks patrol the mouth. Looking back it seems as though that garden is as close as I get to the idea of ancestry, the idea of a family history which stretches back further than the generation or two with which I am familiar.

My grandfather, George, was British, was an Ordinary Seaman in the Royal Navy, stopped off in Durban with the fleet during the Second World War. I don't know the circumstances of their meeting and their courtship, but in 1945 they were married. Iris would have been in her late twenties which was considered quite old for a woman to be married in those days. There is a single incident from this time which my grandmother has talked of. Shortly after the war George took Iris back to England to meet his family. They travelled by boat and presently arrived in London, bound for George's family home, a terrace-house in a working-class part of the city. My grandmother had prepared carefully for the meeting. She wore high-heels and stockings. She wore a picture-hat which framed her head. She is a tall woman and she walked down the centre of the drab London street, George's new bride, feeling splendid and exotic.

My father was born in London, and in 1947 Iris and George moved back to South Africa and into the maw of history. Smut's United Party lost the General Election of 1948, and the first apartheid government was elected to power. Suddenly Iris's Colouredness was very much an issue. A series of laws enacted over the next few

years, including the Mixed Marriages Act of 1952, would make their life difficult and their union unlawful. My grandmother did what many South Africans in her position were tempted to do, she passed herself off as white. In one of the mongrel terms of apartheid she became a "try-for-white". She has a fair skin if she keeps out of the sun, and manageable hair. Iris and George moved over the hill to the white area of Durban North. They settled and worked and had three more children and raised a family, in the way of ordinary couples everywhere. I have no idea of the nature of the compromises they managed, whether there were moments of fear and danger, what was said within the family and what was left unsaid - because my grandmother will tell nobody. She sent her children into the world with the unforgivable marks - the dusky skin and the crimp in the hair - and with the lie: Remember that you are white like the rest; only remember that you are white...

My father left school at sixteen, took a series of dead-end jobs, as a post-man, as a sales-man. Like his father he drifted into, then out of the navy. He made an unlikely marriage, to a university student of good Anglo-Afrikaner stock - my mother's grandmother was mayor of Windhoek, her father a manager of Barclays Bank - and I was born. I took my father's name but was brought-up in the bosom of my mother's family, the Strydoms. My parents were divorced and this pattern was confirmed. A family joke: our holiday snaps show a clan of blonde Strydoms, the dark Shepherd harboured innocently in their midst.

I see that I have reached the end of my knowledge of my grandmother's story, so for the rest I shall play the student, write of my own observations. It seems that the themes of my grandmother's life - the price that she paid for her deception - are twofold: the themes of silence, and self-effacement. At the heart of her silence is an act of renunciation. Her children and her children's children have grown up in ignorance of their own history. On the other side of the hill is a dark space which we never enter. To my certain knowledge she has never spoken to me or to my mother, her daughter-in-law, of her own mother. If she has spoken to her children then it was with the proviso that this knowledge should be locked in their hearts. This began as a matter of survival, and now it has hardened into an unbreakable habit.

The self-effacement is visible in a certain narrowing-down of expectation, as though life's limits have been tested, enough risked for one life-time. In the thirty years that I have known my grandparents they have lived in the radius of a single city block, in the highrise apartments of Durban's South Beach, an area of transients and old-

folks. It is an area of people leaning over balconies in their shirt-sleeves, smoking lonesome cigarettes, cramped souls in the hot nights. Sad and derelict, but it seems to have answered their need for anonymity. They rode out the stormy weather of the 1970s and 1980s sequestered in the city's twilight zone. Was this a conscious decision? Or simply the habit of a life lived with an eye for the interstices? Now my father lives there with his own small children from a second marriage. His sister, my aunt, lives with my grandmother.

My grandmother's story is the story of a life lived in relation to politics. A life battered and beaten and bargained for and lived in compromise with the politics of an era. And yet I have never known her to express a political opinion. I have never known her to buy a newspaper, vote in a general election or join a political party. She interprets the tragedy of her own life - if she thinks of it as a tragedy - as something personal, a matter of the fates. The events of 1990 and the election of 1994 - an election which should have served to unshackle her life from the madness of history gone wrong - left her unmoved. I think of her in her flat, old and bent with arthritis and prideful and courageous, gazing down on the same view.

And so where does this leave me? More particularly, where does it leave me in relation to issues of race, class and identity - those issues which have confronted all South Africans so pointedly, and which continue to do so as we discuss the meaning of apartheid. I am not black, but then neither am I white. I have lived my life as part of a lie which was in turn perpetrated in response to a greater lie, the lie of apartheid. Unravelling my personal history means unravelling a knot of truth and lies, the spoken and the unspoken and the unspeakable. It is an identity whose ambiguity I can easily live with. In fact, such uncertainty is to be welcomed, celebrated, after the rigid categories of the past. What I cannot escape is the anger and the sadness. Anger that the price paid by my grandmother was so high, that she had to forego one life in exchange for another. And sadness that for her freedom has come too late.

★

Summary: Archaeology and Post-Colonialism.

It remains to draw together some of the comments in this introductory chapter, and to give the plan for the following chapters. As a first pass at describing a post-colonial

archaeology, and at the same time of commenting on some of the more progressive modes of archaeological practice which have been mooted in the literature, I want to situate it in relation to two notions which I hold in considerable sympathy, but which require further comment in this context. The first is Hodder's description of what he calls "alternative" archaeologies, by which he means a raft of non- and anti-establishment perspectives. In *Reading the Past* (1994) he specifies this notion in the following way: "By "established" I mean the archaeology written by Western, upper-middle class, and largely Anglo-Saxon males" (166). The three "alternative" perspectives which he identifies are "indigenous archaeologies", "feminist archaeology", and what he calls "working-class and other perspectives within the contemporary West" (166). Under the heading of "indigenous archaeologies" he discusses native claims to the past in Australia and the United States, and issues around Inuit and Sami (Lapp) rights (although, interestingly, he omits mention of archaeology in Africa). In the same vein he writes of "the importance of a feminist perspective in archaeology", which is part of a "contemporary current" in social theory.

Clearly Hodder's notion of "alternative" archaeologies is important in that it admits the existence of other viewpoints, other interests, other ways of entering and appropriating the past. However, it seems to me that the danger in such an approach concerns the absence of implied critique. It contains within it the idea that such "alternative" archaeologies are optional - they are there to deepen and enrich traditional archaeology, and not to replace it. If "established" archaeology is for white males in the West, then presumably feminist archaeologies are for women, and indigenous archaeologies are for black archaeologists in the non-West. All that "established" archaeology need do is to broaden its terms to include these other perspectives.

The point that I want to emphasize about a post-colonial archaeology is that it entails a disciplinary-wide critique. It applies as directly to archaeologists working in the traditional centres of the discipline, as those on the periphery. If you like, the challenges of post-colonialism are as relevant in Cambridge and Berkeley, as they are in Maputo, Cape Town and Delhi. Implicit in notions of "metropole" and "periphery", and the terms which I have used to describe the relationship between the discipline's parts, is the kind of geographical and economic understanding developed by so-called "under-development" and dependency theories of development. I shall return to these ideas in greater detail in Chapter Six in which I

explore "Post-Colonial versus Neo-Colonial Archaeologies". For the moment, what I want to note - and here I return to the ideas of "sameness" and "difference" - is that these same forces and relations make "colonialist" archaeologies the inverse face of "imperialist" archaeologies. They tie together ideas and practices developed in the wild spaces of the discipline's periphery with the kind of theory emerging from the discipline's centres. And they mean that the kind of thorough-going review of disciplinary aims, procedures and practices implicit in the notion of a post-colonial archaeology is as relevant in the one as it is in the other. This is not a call for native voices, or a call for a greater say for Third World archaeologists, so much as it is a call to change the rules of the game.

The second idea that I want to comment on is the notion of a "world archaeology". This has an interesting history. It was first used to refer to a positivist desire to establish a body of universally agreed method and theory. This would unite the disparate arms of the discipline in a "world" archaeology. It was against this sense of the notion that Trigger was writing in his 1984 paper "Alternative Archaeologies: Nationalist, Colonialist, Imperialist", and again in "Prospects for a world archaeology" (1986)²⁷. More recently, the notion of a world archaeology has been used to refer to an embracing concern with Third World and indigenous archaeologies. In this second sense it reflects a belated realisation that archaeology is not only a phenomenon of the West, but includes a number of local and non-Western forms and practitioners. The historical moment of such a world archaeology was undoubtedly the first World Archaeological Congress held in Southampton, England, in September 1986. It was attended by 850 delegates from more than 70 countries. Unusually for such a gathering, many of them were from the Third World. There were also a number of non-professional archaeologists and "nonacademics", representative of native groups. Peter Ucko, the moving spirit behind the first WAC, and subsequently of the world archaeology movement more broadly, describes this as "the result of determined and highly successful attempt" to bring together interested parties. He writes:

Many of the latter, accustomed to being treated as the "subjects" of archaeological and anthropological observation, had never before been

²⁷. In the latter paper he writes: "David L. Clarke... saw the development of scientific archaeology as putting an end to distinctive regional schools and leading to the creation of a unified world archaeology. In the course of this development, the errors and idiosyncrasies of pre-scientific archaeology would be eliminated and the useful concepts consolidated and amplified to form a logically integrated system" (1).

admitted as equal participants in the discussion of their own (cultural) past or present, with their own particularly vital contribution to make towards global, cross-cultural understanding. (1990: ix)²⁸

He continues: "The Congress therefore really addressed world archaeology in its widest sense". The proceedings of the Congress were published in over 20 volumes of the *One World Archaeology* series, a significant achievement in its own right.

Fittingly, it was the issue of the non-participation of South African and Namibian archaeologists which forced the break with traditional archaeology and secured the Third World emphasis in the Congress. Ucko describes the break with the International Union of Prehistoric and Protohistoric Sciences and the events leading up to the Congress in his book-length treatment, *Academic Freedom and Apartheid; The Story of the World Archaeological Congress* (1987). This is an unusual work - partly autobiographical, partly documentary, its importance lay in the manner in which it focussed attention on the relationship between archaeology and apartheid, and the issues which this raised: academic freedom, accountability, the inescapable mutual imbrication of archaeology and politics.

At the same time it succeeds marvellously in capturing the atmosphere of the Congress. At one point Ucko describes the session in which he presented a paper: "my precirculated paper was about problems in setting up what are called culture houses in Zimbabwe... There was time for only about ten minutes of discussion of it but that discussion involved an archaeologist and an ethnographer from Papua New Guinea, one a native Papua New Guinean and the other an expatriate, a British archaeologist who had worked in West Africa, British and expatriate Botswana educationalists, and a Zimbabwean, as well as our Mauri Chairman" (177-8). The emotional high-point of the Congress was the "Evening of Music, Drama and Dance from all over the World", an event which involved ordinary residents of Southampton and Congress participants. Ucko describes the scene:

The bars opened and people rushed to take drinks back to their tables - one I remember, especially, crowded with the official Chinese delegation of senior archaeologists happily ensconced with local Chinese restaurateurs. Pig tailed Indian children from the city sat crowded together with the children of my academic colleagues, outside the circle reserved for performers. The noise and spirit was indescribable... the performances began with the crash of the

²⁸. This is in Ucko's foreword to *The Excluded Past; Archaeology in Education* (1990).

Chinese Lion and continued throughout that fantastic evening with a vitality which shook everyone there. (176-7)

This enthusiasm extended to the notion of world archaeology. In the transcript of his comments in the plenary session Peter Stone "charges" the Steering Committee "with not forgetting what has happened here, through this week". He continues: "I would like to charge them to take this feeling, this atmosphere, this desire for *world* archaeology to the IUPPS" (207). In fact, this engagement was subsequently continued with Congresses in Venezuela (1990) and New Delhi (1994), and Inter-congresses in South Dakota (1989), Kenya (1993) and Croatia (1998)²⁹. In a pleasingly symmetrical gesture which brings the story of the World Archaeological Congress full circle WAC4 will be held in Cape Town, South Africa, in January 1998 under the patronage of Nelson Mandela. At this meeting - convened, as it were, on the site of its own conception - the challenge for the world archaeology movement will be to both restate its programme, and to orient it around a core set of issues. As I read them, these are first and foremost issues of the globalization of archaeology, and the relation between First World and Third World archaeologies - that is, the issues and concerns of a post-colonial archaeology.

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In Chapter Two ("The Problem of Theory") I situate the notion of a post-colonial archaeology in relation to some contemporary developments in archaeological theory. The year following WAC1 saw the publication of two works which predicted a different sort of future for archaeology: Shanks and Tilley's *Re-Constructing Archaeology* (1987), and *Social Theory and Archaeology* (1987). In his preface to *Re-Constructing Archaeology*, Hodder comments that this work sets the agenda for archaeological theory for the next decade ("Our task over the next decade is to educate ourselves so that we can read this book" 1987: xv)³⁰. My starting point is to

²⁹. I was fortunate enough to attend the Inter-congress on the island of Brac in Croatia, 3-7 May 1998, on "The Destruction and Conservation of Cultural Property". This experience was valuable from a number of points of view, but most especially in affording me a first-hand view of how WAC works through being drafted onto the Executive as the proxy junior representative for Eastern and Southern Africa.

³⁰. For a world archaeological perspective on theory see the volume edited by Peter Ucko called *Theory in Archaeology; A world perspective* (1995). This is the

note that the subject of theory in archaeology is more than usually bedevilled, in no small measure as a result of the evidence with which archaeologists deal. There is a sense in which material culture - the universe of humanly transformed material objects - sets its own limits to the project of theory in archaeology. For this reason I begin in a somewhat elliptical fashion by discussing the place of material culture in the traditions of Western thought and philosophy (this is under the heading of "Words and Things"). In the second part of the chapter I pick up on some of the ideas, themes and issues raised in this and in the previous chapter in making a series of more general remarks about archaeological theory and post-colonialism.

In Chapter Three ("Archaeology and Apartheid") I take on the historiography of archaeology in South Africa. I argue that the nature of the relationship between archaeology and apartheid has been widely misunderstood, not least by archaeologists who were generally sympathetic towards the aims of the anti-apartheid movement. It was a relationship which was both more accommodating and more ambiguous than most archaeologists are prepared to admit. At the same time, however, the shortcomings of South African archaeology are the shortcomings of the discipline at large, rather than a peculiarity of the discipline as it exists locally. As a test case, the relationship between archaeology and apartheid has much to say about Anglo-American archaeology which is both challenging and suggestive, as it does about colonialist archaeologies in general.

In Chapter Four ("The Social Value of Archaeology") I address the question of social value, which has increasingly seemed to me to lie at the centre of the kind of review of disciplinary aims and practices which I describe. Why do archaeology? For whom do we write? Of what value is the study of the past in a post-colonial society? Here again, I would like to root this discussion in personal experience. At the beginning of 1997 I devised and taught an introductory module on archaeology to a group of Masters students from the Department of History at the University of the Western Cape, an historically black university with a reputation as a site of anti-apartheid struggle³¹. There were four students in my class, all of whom are African, and each of

proceedings of the "World Day" session of the EuroTAG meeting of the Theoretical Archaeology Group, Southampton University, 14-16 December 1992.

³¹. The programme title was ARCHLINK. It was set in place by Martin Hall. It offered internships in archaeology to a maximum of six students, with the aim of encouraging a wider appreciation of the uses of archaeological methodology amongst the historical studies disciplines. At the same time it was part of a wider programme to exchange resources between tertiary institutions in the Western Cape.

whose experience was representative in some way of what it meant to be black under apartheid. Thembi is about my own age and comes from the Eastern Cape. His schooling had been interrupted by the school boycotts of the mid-1980s. The fact that he is putting himself through university represents something of a personal triumph. When he graduates he plans to return to the Eastern Cape as a teacher.

Mbulelo lives in Langa and is a member of the Langa residents association. There is a considerable tension in his being at university. As a potential bread-winner in a large family there is pressure on him to get a job and earn a salary. On the other hand, good jobs are scarce, and a further degree might open doors. Michael is the angriest member of the group, and at the same time the most suspicious of this overture from a well-resourced, historically mainly-white university. One of my own greatest pleasures from the course is to direct him towards the passionately engaged anti-colonial writing of Cabral, Fanon and Biko, and to reach a mutual understanding about the potential role of the past.

The point that I want to make is that for each of these students the question of social value was central, both in their chosen discipline of history, and in our exploration as a group of archaeology. The challenge then, as it is now in this discussion of archaeology and post-colonialism, is to place the study of the archaeological past in a lively, contextually-relevant relation to the present. In this sense, this chapter represents an extended meditation on some of the themes raised in that class.

Chapter Five ("Archaeology and Education") extends the discussion of social value by reporting on a public archaeology project called the Archaeology Workshop, which I founded and ran for six years. The project focussed on school children, teachers and trainee-teachers from the greater Cape Town area, and revolved around a programme of field excursions and classroom activities. This was probably the most personally satisfying aspect of my work as an archaeologist in South Africa. It arose from a dual conviction, in the first place, that if one is seriously intending to change popular perceptions of the past then school children form a highly appropriate constituency. And in the second place, that the last thing that post-processual archaeology needs is another work of pure theory. To be really valuable, ideas need to be tested in practice - and you will find no more unforgiving audience than a group of sixty twelve-year-olds.

In the final chapter (Chapter Six, "Post-Colonial versus Neo-Colonial Archaeologies") I have a number of aims. The first is to paint a picture of archaeology in South Africa as it currently exists, and in particular to dwell on what seem to me to be a number of emerging trends and directions. The second is to describe more fully what the notion of a post-colonial archaeology entails. I do this by describing two modes of archaeology which are presently emerging in South Africa, or which have the potential to emerge. The first is a post-colonial archaeology, but the second is what I call a neo-colonial archaeology. Fundamental to the idea of a neo-colonial archaeology is the notion that rather than transcending the legacy of colonialism, it represents a continuation of the relations typical of colonialist archaeologies, in a slightly altered form. Finally, I set out to comment on a tension which runs through this discussion of archaeology and post-colonialism (just as it runs through discussions of post-colonialism in general), the tension between hope and despair.

I completed the final part of the writing-up of this work living in London with my wife, who is a dancer here. If I had not got so far along with the project I might have begun in a different way, by describing the desk where I work and the view of the street from out basement flat - the damp, and the greyness, and the quiet normality of life here. In such a setting, more than ever, it seems to me that to set out, as I do, to imagine a different future for the enterprise of which I am part in the Third World, means treading a thin line between optimism and a more sobering rationality. The choices for archaeologists are there, even if they are not easy choices or popular choices. But knowing that they are there is the first step, and it is with this hope that I set down the notion of a post-colonial archaeology as I see it.

CHAPTER 2

THE PROBLEM OF THEORY

The place of theory in archaeology has been deeply problematic. On the one hand archaeology has been conceived as a quintessentially practical discipline. The real arena of archaeology is the field and the laboratory: surveying, excavating, numbering, sorting, drawing, displaying. Theory in archaeology has been thought of as something optional, but really unnecessary. It is the pursuit of the pedantic and the hopelessly impractical - sneeringly condescended to as the preserve of armchair intellectuals. Writing theory in archaeology has seemed somehow effete, unmanly, in what remains the most masculine of the social sciences. Glyn Daniel refers to this division in the discipline in *The Idea of Prehistory* (1962), where he writes:

In the minds of many people there is a dichotomy between the indoors or study or closet archaeologist, and the archaeologist who gets out into the field - the dirt archaeologist as he is sometimes called, the man who gets mud on his boots and sand in his eyes. (79)

What he fails to add (although his language implies it), is that the secret heart of archaeology has always been in the field. In a seminal paper for a feminist archaeology ("Socio-politics and the woman-at-home ideology", 1985) Joan Gero further specifies this division when she notes that while men monopolise field research, non-field occupations ("archaeological housework") tend to be staffed by women. Gero writes: "We are alerted to certain strong parallels between the male who populates the archaeological record - public, visible, physically active, exploratory, dominant, and rugged, the stereotypic hunter - and the practicing field archaeologist who himself conquers the landscape, brings home the goodies, and takes his data raw!" (344).

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The Marginalization of Theory.

Champion (1991) documents the marginalization of theory in British archaeology, an appropriate example since it is in Britain of all places that developments in

archaeological theory have taken place in the past fifteen years. "It must be immediately apparent to anyone having a perceptive acquaintance with the British archaeological scene that a concern with theoretical archaeology has not been universally shared throughout the discipline or profession", he writes (145). Indeed, theoretical debate is regarded as of no more than "peripheral interest" by many professional archaeologists in Britain. While it is difficult to give an exact indication of the degree to which theoretical issues form a part of current archaeological concerns, "to the extent that publications are an accurate reflection of those concerns, then their role is a minor one" (147). The Council for British Archaeology's *British Archaeological Abstracts* give an indication of the annual published output in different areas of the discipline. Of the 14 236 items abstracted in the seven years from 1983-89, only 227 are listed under the heading "theory and principles". Of these fewer than half are by British authors or appear in British publications, with the majority originating in North America.

The low status of theory in British archaeology is apparent in every area of academic production in the discipline. "There is no major British journal, newly founded or of longer standing, that is wholly or mainly devoted to theoretical debate in archaeology", writes Champion - even though "in the natural sciences the establishment of new subdisciplines or new theoretical orientations is regularly signalled by the appearance of new journals" (148). Moreover, the major journals have in general "had editorial stances notably hostile to such [theoretical] developments in archaeology" (148). Similarly, there "has been little impact on the universities" (148), a fact reflected in the low priority given to theory in undergraduate teaching. "In most departments the syllabus remains doggedly devoted to regional and chronological approaches to archaeology, with little emphasis on thematic or generalised approaches, or to the teaching of the methodology, epistemology and philosophy of archaeology" (148-9). This is in spite of the fact that it is "in the university sector, or at least in some of the university departments, rather than in any other branch of the archaeological profession, that the theoretical debate has been carried on to the extent that it has in Britain" (149).

The idea that archaeology is theoretically informed has failed to penetrate popular perceptions of the discipline. In the media "the dominant theme is still that of the archaeologist as the seeker after treasure, the discoverer of new and spectacular facts and the historian of the rise of great civilizations, an image only reinforced by such mythical, but influential, stereotypes of the archaeologist as Indiana Jones"

(145). In magazines designed for a popular audience such as *Current Archaeology* and *Archaeology Today* "most of the theoretical ferment of the last twenty years has gone unnoticed"; indeed the editorial policy of *Current Archaeology* has in general been one of critical antipathy towards works of theory.

Large parts of the discipline are practiced in a spirit of indifference towards theory - or worse, in a spirit of anti-theoreticism. In *150 Years of Archaeology* (1975) Glyn Daniel argues in a passage that dismisses all post-1960s theoretical archaeology along with the lunatic fringe and forgeries, that it is only because of "the bareness of the pre-Colombian record of archaeology" in which "nothing happens of general interest to the student of world history" that "American archaeologists, dismayed by their archaeological record, have sought refuge in theory and methodology" (371, quoted in Champion 1990: 130-1). In *Current Archaeology* Hodder's *Reading the Past* (1986) was described as "the ultimate egghead's guide to all the latest in archaeological jargon", and "considering its inherently incomprehensible subject, surprisingly well written" (quoted in Champion 1990: 145). In the same publication Clarke's *Analytical Archaeology* was described as "one of the most dangerous" books in archaeology. Appearing as it did in a traditional and deeply conservative British archaeological establishment, Clarke's book was a "bombshell". Reactions "varied from ignoring it, to ridiculing it, to criticising its jargon (and overlooking its message), belittling it as having nothing new to say ("we have been doing this all the time"), and calling it un-British" (130). Writing in the late 1980s in the preface to their *Social Theory and Archaeology* (1987), Shanks and Tilley report that: "Despite the growing plethora of theories, archaeology still remains today a deeply empiricist and anti-theoretical discipline" (vii).

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Words and Things.

However, a large part of the difficulty of theory in archaeology comes from the nature of the object of study itself. There is a sense in which material culture - the vast and teeming world of humanly transformed material objects - is in its own way resistant to the attentions of theory. In *Material Culture and Mass Consumption* (1987) Miller writes:

It will be suggested in the course of this volume that the very physicality of the object which makes it appear so immediate, sensual and assimilable belies its actual nature, and that material culture is one of the most resistant forms of cultural expression in terms of our attempts to comprehend it. (3)

For Miller, the nature of material culture as a kind of quiet but persistent backdrop to human affairs places it somehow *beneath* discussion:

The deeply integrated place of the artefact in constituting culture and human relations has made discussion of it one of the most difficult of all areas of academic discourse. The mundane artefact is not merely problematic but inevitably embarrassing as the focused topic of analysis, a practice which always appears fetishistic. (130)

For David Clarke, the nature of its object of study sets archaeology apart from the other social science disciplines. In *Analytical Archaeology* (1968) he writes:

[The] peculiar aspect of archaeology as a discipline is dictated by the peculiar nature of its data - observations about artefacts and their attributes. The peculiarity or singularity of archaeology then becomes apparent as residing in its role of studying fragments of solidified and preserved hominid behaviour patterns. The data studied is so inherently unlike that of other disciplines that archaeology must erect its own systematic approach or perish as a separate study. (20)

He summarises this sense of difference in the dictum: "... archaeology, is archaeology, is archaeology" (1968: 13). In a similar vein, Trigger writes:

Archaeology is a social science in the sense that it tries to explain what has happened to specific groups of human beings in the past and to generalize about processes of cultural change. Yet, unlike ethnologists, geographers, sociologists, political scientists, and economists, archaeologists cannot observe the behaviour of the people they are studying and, unlike historians, most of them do not have direct access to the thoughts of these people as they are recorded in written texts. Instead archaeologists must infer human behaviour and ideas from the material remains of what human beings have made and used and of their physical impact on the environment. (1989: 19)

The essential distinction here is between what we might call the universe of material objects, and that of written texts. What sets archaeology apart as a discipline is its attempt to approach society and the human subject through their material remains, rather than their language artefacts - through things rather than words.

Understanding the significance of this observation involves briefly revisiting three historical and intellectual contexts. The first is the origins of modern Western philosophy in the philosophical system of the French philosopher Rene Descartes. The second is the new sense of the material world evident in the work of the *philosophes* of the Enlightenment. The third is the particular turn that general social theory has taken in our own century.

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I. Material Culture and Idealist Philosophy.

Rene Descartes.

I have taken as my source one of the classical texts in the field, Bertrand Russell's remarkable *History of Western Philosophy* (1948)¹. It has the advantages of directness and clarity, which more than compensate for its early date. Russell remarks that "Rene Descartes is usually considered the founder of modern philosophy, and, I think, rightly" (580). His two important works of pure philosophy are the *Discourse on Method* (1637), and the *Meditations* (1642). Descartes begins by explaining the method of "Cartesian doubt", as it has come to be called. In order to make a firm basis for his philosophy, he resolves to doubt everything that he can manage to doubt. He begins with a scepticism as regards the senses, which he extends to corporeal nature in general. Even the existence of one's own body is uncertain and may be an illusion. Ultimately, only thought is certain:

While I want to think everything false, it must necessarily be that I who thought was something; and remarking that this truth , I think, therefore I am, was so solid and so certain that all the most extravagant suppositions of the sceptics were incapable of upsetting it, I judged that I could receive it without scruple as the first principle of the philosophy that I sought. (quoted in Russell, 1948: 586)

Russell remarks: "This passage is the kernel of Descartes's theory of knowledge, and contains what is most important in his philosophy"; and is something to which "[most] philosophers since Descartes have attached importance" (586). Descartes's

¹. Its full title is *History of Western Philosophy and its connection with political and social circumstances from the earliest times to the present day*.

formulation makes mind more certain than matter, "and my mind (for me) more certain than the minds of others". He cites as an instance of the relation between mind and matter the famous example in Descartes of the piece of wax:

Certain things are apparent to the senses: it tastes of honey, it smells of flowers, it has a certain sensible colour, size and shape, it is hard and cold, and if struck it emits a sound. But if you put it near the fire, these qualities change, although the wax persists; therefore what appeared to the senses was not the wax itself. (587)

The essence of the wax (the wax itself) is constituted by extension, flexibility and motion - but these are characteristics understood by the mind, rather than revealed by the senses. True knowledge of the wax "is not a vision or touch or imagination, but an inspection of the mind" (Descartes in Russell 1948: 588).

Descartes's philosophical system marks a turning away from matter and the material world, and a turning towards mind, as embodied in the thinking subject. Russell remarks that the particular importance of Descartes in the field of philosophy is that he "brought to completion, or very nearly to completion, the dualism of mind and matter which began with Plato and was developed, largely for religious reasons, by Christian philosophy... The Cartesian system presents two parallel but independent worlds, that of mind and that of matter, each of which can be studied without reference to the other" (590). Henceforth the universe of philosophy is divided in two: on the one hand the world of thought and intellection, which is its proper subject, on the other hand the suspect world of matter².

The Enlightenment.

². In this connection Steven Watson (1996) has referred to what he calls "one of the great commonplaces in the history of Western philosophy"; that is, the "Cartesian project of separating subject from object, self from world in a dualism which privileged the first of the two terms and thereby assured [man's]... domination of nature and any other obstacle he might confront" (20). He quotes William Barrett (*Irrational Man*, London: Heinemann, 1967): "The modern era in philosophy is usually taken to begin with Descartes. The fundamental feature of Descartes' thought is a dualism between the ego and the external world of nature. The ego is the subject, essentially a thinking substance; nature is the world of objects, extended substances. Modern philosophy thus begins with a radical subjectivism, the subject facing the object in a kind of hidden antagonism..." (1967: 180. This is in an essay by Watson called "Colonialism and the Novels of J.M. Coetzee", 1996: 20).

This basic duality between mind and matter was further specified by the *philosophes* of the Enlightenment. I have taken as my guide a useful introductory text by Frank Manuel (*The Enlightenment*, 1965). Essentially an eighteenth-century intellectual movement centred on France and Britain, the Enlightenment forms a bridge between the medieval world-view and modernity. It is in this period that many modern ideas and institutions originate: ideas in the area of moral philosophy, modern notions of the subject, the idea of progress, and the birth of the social sciences (the term itself was introduced towards the end of the eighteenth century). Manuel remarks: "By the time the French Revolution broke out, these ideas had become part and parcel of every up-to-date intellectual's baggage, and they were important equipment for the political action of the Revolution" (16).

The Enlightenment signals the declining influence of the church and the ecclesiastical establishment in intellectual life, and the rise of "an independent secular class of popular philosophers" (1), for whom the Renaissance humanists were forerunners and prototypes. A varied and heterogeneous group, the principle figures of the Enlightenment are listed by Manuel as including "doctors like John Locke; university professors like Adam Smith, Cesare Beccaria, and Immanuel Kant; versatile men-of-letters like Voltaire, Hume, Wieland, and Lessing; aristocratic judicial and administrative officials like Montesquieu, Turgot, and Condorcet; priests harbouring secret heresy like Jean Meslier or abbés like Galiani who were simply heedless of religion. Perhaps most important of all were the free-lance writers (like Diderot and Rousseau)" (1). Despite a variety of approaches their work is linked by a shared set of concerns and themes. Their project was nothing less than to reinvent the intellectual picture of the world. With a kind of religious zeal they set about challenging the orthodox version of nature and society contained in the teachings of the church, under the sign of rationality, reason, and a faith in scientific method. Manuel writes that the intellectuals of the Enlightenment:

...raised the curtain on a new world. They took a fresh and brazen look at reality. Nothing like it had occurred since the time of the Greeks of the fifth century before Christ. They ranged over the whole field of knowledge which had once been the province of the Church, and presented a different view of the physical world, of the nature of man, of society, of religion, and of history. (1-2)

Their work is characterised by intellectual daring and originality, but also by hubris:

They had a sense of the grandeur and the unprecedented nature of their enterprise: they were deliberately effecting a revolution in the fundamental beliefs of mankind.³ (2)

The intellectual origins of the Enlightenment lay in the seventeenth century in a quadumvirate of thinkers - Newton, Bacon, Locke, and Descartes - who together "provided the massive pillars for the erection of a towering new philosophical edifice that began to crowd out the traditional medieval Catholic as well as the Protestant world-view" (4). Its social and historical determinants are listed by Manuel as:

...the new technology, the accumulation of wealth, the discovery and colonization of lands throughout the world, the organizational achievements of the dynastic states, the "relative peace" brought by the European balance of power, the relaxation of old social boundaries, and the emergence of a middle class. (6)

The key to Enlightenment thought is a new sense of power over material nature. Newton's laws of motion and his world-system, the European voyages of discovery in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and the new faith in rational enquiry and the scientific method, have in common a greater confidence in approaching the material world. As such the Enlightenment marks the beginning of an historical reversal in the relation between people and material nature: if previously people had been under the power of a natural world imperfectly understood according to the teachings of the church, then the thought of the Enlightenment is characterised by a sense of analytical entry into a material world described by natural and universal laws. This is accompanied by a new conception of the subject, one which is presaged in the philosophy of Descartes - as autonomous, and self-determining, approaching the natural world with authority and confidence.

This celebration of the powers of the subject, and the new spirit of technological triumphalism, had their corollary in a view of the material world as mute, passive and inert. The natural world became something to be worked on by people - a passive backdrop against which to stage the triumph of the coming into self-realisation of the subject. Michael Shanks describes this conception of material nature as an

³. Manuel refers to "the peculiar rhetoric and bombast of the Age of the Enlightenment, its self-assurance and its sense of triumph"; and more straightforwardly, to "the cocksureness of the *philosophes*" (16).

instrumental one. He writes of "an instrumental view of the object world, that it is open to manipulation and control by human reason and action... Objects may be considered simply as by-products, secondary to the primary goings-on of society... (the natural world) is raw material for development and exploitation, the stuff of progress" (1992: 110). In the nineteenth-century it was above all the new forms of machine production and manufacture which came to epitomise this new sense of power over material nature. In the factories of the British Midlands and the Continent the new forms of production spoke of a human power over the material world, and became the ground on which a new philosophy of society and human nature would be constructed.

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The philosophical effect of casting the relation between people and the object world as an instrumental one was to discourage any notion of material objects participating in directly social relations. Material objects were abstracted out of categories of the social, evacuated from social contexts, henceforth to be related to people in a casual way, as useful objects or accidental debris. Douglas Kellner writes of Jean Baudrillard, the *avant garde* philosopher and contemporary champion of the object (in *Jean Baudrillard: From Marxism to postmodernism and beyond*, 1989):

Baudrillard... claims that in the past, philosophers and others have always experienced and celebrated the splendour of the subject and the misery of the object. It was the subject who made history, who dominated nature, and who was the foundation and guarantor of knowledge. One might add that this was particularly true of the philosophy of subjectivity from Descartes to phenomenology and Sartre, where this philosophy of subjectivity endowed the subject with all the splendid features of freedom, creativity, imagination, certitude, objectivity and knowledge, while the poor object was conceptualized as an inert thing in a casual order, part of a quantitative nexus whose being was defined by number or dead matter. (156-7)

This prising apart of the human, social world and the world of material objects in the categories of Western philosophy meant that there was little to catch the attention of the newly constituted social sciences in the material world. Material objects became the proper subject of the physical and economic sciences, as matter to be quantified, measured, and evaluated according to its physical rather than its social properties. Thus it is that modern Western society rests on a singular philosophical paradox:

even as revolutionary methods of material production in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries led to an historically unprecedented increase in the number and variety of material goods, so the material world has been systematically excluded from the categories of social thought. The very intrusiveness of material objects at a phenomenal and experiential level, has been accompanied by their elusiveness at a theoretical and conceptual level.

Daniel Miller makes this the central observation of *Material Culture and Mass Consumption* (1987). He writes that:

there is an extraordinary lack of academic discussion pertaining to artefacts as objects, despite their pervasive presence as the context for modern life. In philosophy, for example, there are numerous discussions of objects which refer to some observed attribute or perceptual property pertaining to things as such, but books with titles such as *Words and Things* (e.g. Brown 1958; Gellner 1959) will be found to have very little to say about the social implications of things as objects, while having plenty to contribute to an understanding of the nature of words. Political philosophy is more concerned with objects as properties than the properties of objects, while phenomenology, as that branch of philosophy which claims more direct concern with every-day objects, considers these mainly as media for addressing the role of agency and the nature of subjectivity... The scale of this discrepancy between theory and practice may ironically itself become important evidence for uncovering the nature of objects in the modern world. (85)

The world invoked by Western philosophy would appear to be a curiously bloodless one - an abstract world of thought and cognition, without any place for the physical, the sensual and the corporeal. The oppositions between mind and matter (Descartes), and the social world and the material world (Enlightenment thought), effectively place the material world outside the province of its concerns. This leaves the system free to contemplate pure thought and abstraction, untrammelled by the gross physical world, or inconvenienced by materiality.

However, if this exclusion of the material world from the categories of modern philosophy is enabling in some respects, then it is also crucially disabling - for it excludes from consideration that part of the world which is most immediately present to the senses. This exclusion of the most immediately perceptible part of experience must threaten to seriously compromise any system of thought. It poses for western philosophy the problem of how to proceed with a philosophical programme which, in

terms of its very constitution, excludes the material world from its conception of society - against the evidence of the senses, and of history.

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The Ideology of the Aesthetic.

I turn now to consider an "extraordinary" work by Terry Eagleton (the adjective is Frederic Jameson's), and his major work to date: *The Ideology of the Aesthetic* (1990). In this work Eagleton traces this marginalization of the material world in modern philosophy, and its reincorporation via the liminal category of the aesthetic.

The idea of the aesthetic has exercised the major philosophers of modernity to a degree which appears surprising at first glance:

Anyone who inspects the history of European philosophy since the Enlightenment must be struck by the curiously high priority assigned to it by aesthetic questions. For Kant, the aesthetic holds out a promise of reconciliation between Nature and humanity. Hegel grants art a lowly status within his theoretical system, but nevertheless produces an elephantine treatise on it. The aesthetic for Kierkegaard must yield ground to the higher truths of ethics and religious faith, but remains a recurrent preoccupation of his thought. For Schopenhauer and Nietzsche, in sharply contrasting ways, aesthetic experience represents a supreme form of value. Marx's impressively erudite allusions to world literature are matched by Freud's modest confession that the poets have said it all before him. In our own century, Heidegger's esoteric meditations culminate in a kind of aestheticized ontology, while the legacy of Western Marxism from Lukacs to Adorno allots to art a theoretical privilege surprising at first glance for a materialist current of thought. In the contemporary debates on modernity, modernism and postmodernism, "culture" would seem to be a key category for the analysis and understanding of late capitalist society. (1)

Eagleton begins by noting that the notion of the aesthetic starts life as a term which refers not in the first place to "art" or "high culture" - a usage with which we are familiar - but rather to the material, sensual world in general. The opposition that it points to is not between high and low culture, but between the material, corporeal world, and the abstract world of thought and intellection:

Aesthetics is born as a discourse of the body. In its original formulation by the German philosopher Alexander Baumgarten, the term refers not in the first place to art, but, as the Greek *aisthesis* would suggest, to the whole region of human perception and sensation, in contrast to the more rarefied domain of conceptual thought. The distinction which the term "aesthetic" initially enforces in the mid-eighteenth century is not between "art" and "life", but between the material and the immaterial: between things and thoughts, sensations and ideas, that which is bound up with our creaturely life as opposed to that which conducts some shadowy existence in the recesses of the mind. (13)

Its adoption as a central term in modern philosophy might be interpreted as a tacit admission of the aporia within its system:

It is as though philosophy suddenly wakes up to the fact that there is a dense, swarming territory beyond its own mental enclave which threatens to fall utterly outside its sway. That territory is nothing less than the whole of our sensate life together - the business of affections and aversions, of how the world strikes the body on its sensory surfaces, of that which takes root in the gaze and the guts and all that arises from our most banal biological insertion into the world. The aesthetic concerns this most gross and palpable dimension of the human, which post-Cartesian philosophy, in some curious lapse of attention, has somehow managed to overlook. (13)

Eagleton calls it: "the first stirrings of a primitive materialism - of the body's long inarticulate rebellion against the tyranny of the Theoretical" (1990: 13).

But if for modern philosophy the notion of the aesthetic represents a reinsertion of the material world into its categories, then this is a partial, limited kind of reinsertion. Indeed, Eagleton finds something dishonest or disingenuous about it. For it must be carried out within strict limits, without allowing this materiality to overwhelm its own idealist precepts:

The body... must be judiciously reinserted into a rational discourse which might otherwise wither into despotism; but this operation must be carried out with a minimum of disruption to that discourse itself. (265)

The notion of the aesthetic, after all, was born as a compromise formation, as an attempt to solve a conundrum for idealist philosophy. The idea of compromise is implicit in its very nature, and runs through its usage. What traditional aesthetics "yearns for is an object at once sensuous and rule-bound, a body which is also a mind, combining all the delicious plenitude of the senses with the authority of an

abstract decree" (263). Thus, rather than opening up the categories of philosophy to the material world, the aesthetic acts as a kind of containment. In capitalist society the specific form taken by this containment is the process whereby cultural and artistic production come to be separated out from the other spheres of social production and political action. Art becomes an enclave under special dispensation. This autonomization of culture in capitalist society - its uncoupling from the realms of the ethico-political and cognitive - has meant that while art has become a locus where material objects can draw attention to and delight in their own materiality, at the same time these enjoyments are judged to be essentially superfluous, as an ornament to the real business of life. Thus art becomes an area of life where the corporeal, sensual world can stage its own apotheosis; as a realm where coldly analytic reason makes way for more sensual, affective kinds of appreciation - but at the cost of seeming frivolous. The same gesture which opens up the subject to the potentially liberatory subversions of materiality and the potentially subversive freedoms of art, closes off their relevance as a guide to political action. Eagleton comments of the moment of modernity, that moment when art becomes unshackled from the structures of church and state:

Art... can now cease to be a mere lackey to political power, swearing fidelity only to its own law; but this is not greatly disturbing, since the very social conditions which allow this to happen - the autonomization of culture - also prevent art's potentially subversive freedom from having much of an effect on other areas of social life. (367)

The notion of the aesthetic - art - "comes to signify pure supplementarity, that marginal region of the affective/instinctual/non-instrumental which a reified rationality finds difficulty in incorporating" (367-8). Or more crudely, art "can act as a kind of safety-valve or sublimation of those otherwise dangerous reaches of the psyche" (368).

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II. Social Theory and Material Culture.

The second intellectual context which we need to revisit briefly is the development of general social theory in the course of our own century. As anyone with even a passing acquaintance with social theory will know, one of its most remarkable

features has been the extent to which it has looked to models of language to understand social and cultural phenomena. "Perhaps the most significant feature of twentieth-century intellectual development, has been the way in which the study of language has opened the route to an understanding of mankind, social history, and the laws of how a society functions", observe Rosalind Coward and John Ellis in the opening sentence of *Language and Materialism; Developments in Semiology and the Theory of the Subject* (1977: 1). "Language", affirms Eagleton, "with its problems, mysteries and implications, has become both paradigm and obsession for twentieth-century intellectual life" (*Literary Theory: An Introduction* 1983: 97).

According to Coward and Ellis this development has taken two forms: the first was the "massive" development of synchronic linguistics in the early part of the century. The second was the extension of insights gained from the scientific study of language to other areas of social and cultural life, particularly through the discipline of structural anthropology. From Saussure, to Levi-Strauss, to Barthes, Derrida, Lacan, and any number of other writers it is possible to trace a direct line in which language, however differently conceived, acts as both model and metaphor for society, for the subject, and for the structure of consciousness itself. In order to make sense of subsequent developments in archaeological theory it is necessary to briefly recapitulate some of this history.

Saussure.

Ferdinand de Saussure's *Course in General Linguistics* (1916) stands at the root of these developments. Saussure shifted the attention of study away from the historical development of language, to the study of language as a complete system at a given point in time - that is, from the diachronic to the synchronic study of language. He famously divided language into two components: *langue*, the abstract system of rules or "language conventions" which structure language; and *parole*, the specific instances of speech. Of these, it is *langue* that engages his attention:

What is natural to mankind is not oral speech but the faculty of constructing a language, i.e. a system of distinct signs corresponding to distinct ideas.
(Saussure in Hawkes 1977: 21).

The lasting usefulness of Saussure's work has been in demonstrating how meaning is constructed within this system, in the relation between signifier, signified, and referent. Briefly put, Saussure argues that the relationship between signifier and signified is an arbitrary one, as is the relationship between the whole sign and its referent in the real world. He rejects an intrinsic or "substantial" theory of meaning, for a "relational" one: meaning is constructed out of difference.

Whatever distinguishes one sign from the other constitutes it... in language there are only differences *without positive terms*. (Saussure in Hawkes, 1977: 28)

Levi-Strauss.

The extension of the insights gained from structural linguistics to other areas of social life is associated in particular with the work of the French anthropologist, Claude Levi-Strauss. Levi-Strauss was greatly influenced by Roman Jakobson, a leading figure of the Prague Linguistic Circle, and later of the "New School of Social Research" in New York. I have taken as my source a paper first published by Levi-Strauss in *Word: Journal of the Linguistic Circle of New York*, a journal founded by Jakobson and his associates, but available in English translation as the second chapter of *Structural Anthropology* (1963)⁴.

Levi-Strauss begins by affirming the leading role of structural linguistics in the social sciences:

Linguistics occupies a special place among the social sciences to whose rank it unquestionably belongs. It is not merely a social science like the others, but, rather, the one in which by far the greatest progress has been made. It is probably the only one which can truly claim to be a science and which has achieved both the formulation of an empirical method and an understanding of the data submitted to its analysis. (31)

He predicts that this will lead it to remake the social sciences after its own image:

⁴. The original title of the paper is: "*L'analyse structurale en linguistique et en anthropologie*". Leach calls it "the foundation work of all his subsequent structural anthropology" (1970: 28).

Structural linguistics will certainly play the same renovating role with respect to the social sciences that nuclear physics, for example, has played for the physical sciences. (33)

Anthropology in particular has much to learn from structural linguistics. It is no longer a case of casual co-operation between the disciplines as in the past, for now anthropologists find themselves

in a situation which formally resembles that of structural linguistics... Like phonemes, kinship terms are elements of meaning; like phonemes, they acquire meaning only if they are integrated into systems. "Kinship systems", like "phonemic systems", are built by the mind on the level of unconscious thought. Finally, the recurrence of kinship patterns, marriage rules, similar prescribed attitudes between certain types of relatives, and so forth, in scattered regions of the globe and in fundamentally different societies, leads us to believe that, in the case of kinship as well as linguistics, the observable phenomena result from the action of laws which are general but implicit. The problem can therefore be formulated as follows: although they belong to *another order of reality*, kinship phenomena are *of the same type* as linguistic phenomena. (34)

Levi-Strauss's subsequent work - on kinship theory, on the logic of myth, and on the theory of primitive classification - remains faithful to this basic proposition. The common theme which binds these interests is that of illuminating the manner in which meaning is constructed in and through everyday cultural practices and objects. The artefacts of culture function as a kind of language through which people speak their sense of the world, and their place in it. Leach quotes Levi-Strauss as saying that anthropology should be considered a branch of semiology (1970: 98).

Levi-Strauss's work is genuinely original, and gave rise - in structuralism - to an enormous cultural and academic industry, spanning a number of disciplines. Some of this work has been memorable and enlightening. One thinks of Roland Barthes's exploration of the structure of myth, and its witty application to French popular culture (in *Mythologies*, 1970 [1957]). Indeed, the discovery that there are deep structures that order the forms of cultural expression is profoundly important, akin to Freud's discovery of the unconscious mind, or Marx's uncovering of the exploitative relations of capitalist production, masked by the forms of everyday life.

Derrida.

The idea of order (or "structure") emerges as something of an animating theme in the structuralist project. In a revealing statement in *Myth and Meaning* (1978) Levi-Strauss writes: "Since I was a child, I have been bothered by, let's call it the irrational, and have been trying to find an order behind what is given to us as disorder" (11). In this sense, post-structuralism appears as an all-out attack on structuralism's stable universe. Significantly, Derrida grounds his critique of structuralism in a reconsideration of Saussurean linguistics. In Derrida's theory of language there are no stable terms or secure foundations from which the chain of signification can grow. Language is a process of signification which in the end refers back to itself, to the play of difference between its terms. This is a process to which Derrida gives the name of *differance*, a term which captures the dual sense of "difference" and "deferral". In an interview with Julia Kristeva he summarises the point:

The play of differences supposes, in effect, syntheses and referrals which forbid, at the moment or in any sense, that a single element be *present* in and of itself, referring only to itself. Whether in the order of spoken or written discourse, no element can function as a sign without referring to another element which is itself not simply present. This inter-weaving results in each "element" - a phoneme or grapheme - being constituted on the basis of the trace within it of the other elements of the chain or system... Nothing, neither among the elements nor within the system, is anywhere either simply present or absent. There are only, everywhere, differences of differences and traces of traces. (Derrida in Bapty and Yates, 1990: 7)

Terry Eagleton notes (in *Literary Theory; An Introduction*, 1983) that this is a view of language with upsetting implications for the whole tradition of Western philosophy, which has itself been "[deeply] committed to a belief in some ultimate "word", presence, essence, truth or reality which will act as the foundation of all our thought, language and experience" (131); a philosophical orientation which Derrida calls "logocentric". Western philosophy "has yearned for the sign which will give meaning to all others - the "transcendental signifier" - and for the anchoring, unquestionable meaning to which all our signs can be said to point (the "transcendental signified") (131). A number of candidates have been suggested for this role: God, the Idea, the World Spirit, the Self, substance, matter. Since each has to found a whole system of thought and language it cannot be implicated in that system, but must somehow be anterior to these discourses: "That any such transcendental meaning is a fiction -

though perhaps a necessary fiction - is one consequence of [Derrida's] theory of language" (131).

For all its iconoclasm in the field of meaning, post-structuralism retains its attachment to the idea of language - albeit a model of language which is very differently conceived. Bapty and Yates write (in the introduction to *Archaeology After Structuralism*, 1990) that post-structuarlism "is, in fact, heavily dependent upon structuralism, and is not so much a move beyond as a move *through* its logic" (6). Of the development of social theory in general we might note that in the idea of language, itself an abstract sign system, it found the vehicle best able to express the tendency towards abstraction, and towards a kind of "dematerialized" reality, in western philosophy in general.

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Where does this leave archaeology, a discipline founded on a paradox, a social science with a stubborn attachment to the material world? The inevitable conclusion that one reaches is the following: that archaeology would seem to be both ambiguously and uncomfortably situated within the intellectual contexts of the social sciences, and the traditions of Western thought in general. Its attempt to approach society and the human subject through their material objects cuts against the grain of modern philosophy, whose energies are directed towards keeping apart the world of things and the world of thoughts. The sense of basic opposition between language and material culture makes archaeology's relation with general social theory troubled and problematic. By a kind of terrible irony, the discipline finds that its founding premise sits at right angles to the conventions of contemporary academic life. The sheer intransigent *presence* of material objects, the fullness and roundness of their materiality, as it were, registers as a kind of affront to the passages that one reads in some works of contemporary theory - all flickering absence, and endlessly deferred meaning. Archaeology, carrying its lonely standard for the material world, finds itself with an intellectual project which is either pre-modern, or post-postmodern - either the visionary eccentric of the social sciences, or the village idiot who labours on in the old way. The question arises: But what of theory in archaeology? How has archaeological theory negotiated these various contexts?

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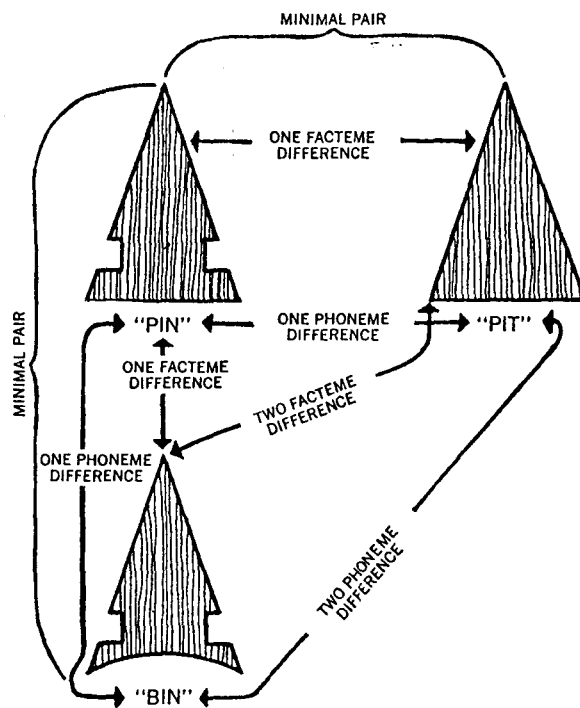
III. Things as Words.

By way of answer, I shall consider the theoretically adventurous work of the North American archaeologist James Deetz. In an extraordinary chapter headed "Structure" from his 1967 work, *Invitation to Archaeology*, Deetz attempts a literal equivalence between material culture and language. He begins by speculating that words and artefacts might be considered structurally identical:

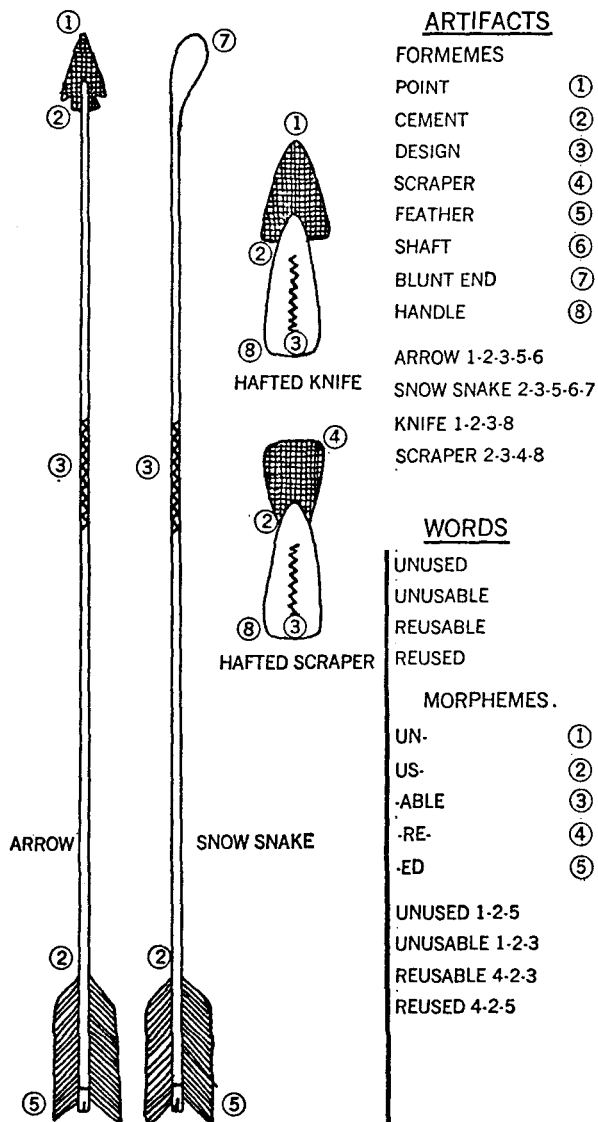
Words are products of human motor activity. They come into being through the action of muscles, directed by the mind through nerve impulses, on substance, in this case air... Artifacts, like words, are the products of human motor activity, made through the action of muscles under mental guidance on the raw material involved. The resultant form of any artifact is a combination of structural units - attributes - which in any particular combination produce an object which has a specific function in the culture which made it. Change any one of these attributes and the functional significance will change if the change is sufficient to affect the significance. In other words, there may be structural units in artifacts which correspond to phonemes and morphemes in language, a correspondence which goes beyond simple analogy, reflecting an essential identity between language and objects in a structural sense. If this is true, in view of the close similarity between the way in which words and artifacts are created, might not words be but one aspect of a larger class of cultural products which includes all artifacts as well? If so, then the structural rules which linguists have formulated for language might hold for the artifacts with which the archaeologist works. (87-8)

What Deetz proposes is a literal transposition of the structural units of language onto the system of material culture; but whereas in language these structural units are units of *meaning*, in the case of artefacts they appear as units of *function*. Thus phoneme becomes "facteme": that is "the minimum class of attributes which affects the functional significance of the artifact" (89). Morpheme becomes "formeme": "the "minimal class of objects which has functional significance" (90). Allophonic variation is rewritten as allofactic variation: small variations in form without functional significance. Deetz accompanies his text with a striking series of diagrams which tellingly capture this sense of equivalence between objects and words.

The interest of this chapter is that Deetz - almost accidentally it seems - engages with the major currents of twentieth century intellectual life: the idea of language as a



"Factemes and phonemes", after James Deetz (*Invitation to Archaeology* 1967: 88).



"Formemes and morphemes", after James Deetz (*Invitation to Archaeology* 1967: 91).

model for other manifestations of cultural production. The echoes of the work of Levi-Strauss in particular are striking (although Deetz never cites him as a source). He speculates on the value of this line of investigation:

Could it be that both words and artifacts are in fact different expressions of the same system?... the close similarities which language and artifacts exhibit seem to indicate a vital and potentially exciting direction of archaeological analysis not yet fully realized. (86, 92)

As far as I know Deetz's schema has never been taken-up, however a decade later he repeated and extended the experiment - this time squarely within the structuralist method. *In Small Things Forgotten* (Deetz 1977) traces the cultural fortunes of a group of settlers on the eastern seaboard of colonial North America, from their origins as displaced English yeomen in the early seventeenth century, through to the late eighteenth century. According to Deetz the course of their development describes a parabola. It began by reflecting the cultural traditions of rural England but increasingly (after 1660) moved towards local and endemic forms in response to local conditions and the relative isolation. In a second transformation in the late eighteenth century these by now Americanized cultural forms were exchanged for the cultural forms of the English metropole:

This re-Anglicization of American culture meant that on the eve of the American Revolution, Americans were more English than they had been in the past since the first years of the colonies. (38)

It is this second transformation in particular which attracts Deetz's attention. *In Small Things Forgotten* describes this change in Anglo-American life as it is reflected in a range of material culture transformations which have proved particularly suggestive to archaeologists. To explain these transformations in the material culture of New England, Deetz revives the notion of cognitive structures which he had first put forward in *Invitation to Archaeology*:

The tiny ship that dropped anchor in Plymouth Harbour in the December cold of 1620 carried a precious cargo. Its passengers, English emigrants who had come to the New World for a variety of reasons, brought with them a blueprint - in their minds - for re-creating the culture they had left behind. (36)

These changes in Anglo-American material culture in the late eighteenth-century were not random but reflected a transformation in the underlying cognitive structure:

a new perception amongst these settlers of the world and their place in it. Deetz labels this new world-view Georgian, as opposed to the earlier essentially medieval world-view; a term which in its specific usage refers to the architectural type of Anglo-American Renaissance building. He quotes the art historian Allan Gowans (1964) on the contrast between the Georgian and medieval world-view:

More than a change of style or detail is involved here: it is a change in basic tradition. Like folk buildings earlier, these structures grow out of a way of life, a new and different concept of the relationship between man and nature. Gone is the medieval 'acceptance' of nature taking its course, along with the unworked materials, exposed construction, and additive composition that expressed it. This design is informed by very different convictions: that the world has a basic immutable order; that men by powers of reason can discover what that order is; and that, discovering it, they can control the environment as they will. (Gowans in Deetz, 1977: 39-40)⁵

Deetz sets out the oppositions as he sees them:

Order and control: the eighteenth century is called the age of reason, and it saw the rise of scientific thought in the Western world and the development of the Renaissance-derived form, balanced and ordered, in the Anglo-American world. By 1760 significant numbers of New Englanders and their counterparts in other colonies partook of this new world view. Mechanical where the older was organic, balanced where the older had been asymmetrical, individualized where the older had been corporate, this new way of perceiving the world is the hallmark of our third period, which lasts to the present and accounts for much of the way in which we ourselves look upon reality. (40)

These, of course, are the themes of the Enlightenment. The excitement of Deetz's work is that he should have been able to show how this fundamental social transformation was reflected - and more, *carried through* - in the material world.

Viewing material culture in this way involves a shift in analytic ground, from function to meaning. Deetz begins *In Small Things Forgotten* by sketching an imaginary scene of cultural labour - the work of transforming an asymmetrical house facade to the Georgian form by adding a new wing and relocating the door:

Standing back to view his work, the carpenter noticed how much more the house seemed like those in the centre of town. Although it stood in the middle of more than a hundred acres of farmland tilled by the Mott family, its new face

⁵. Alan Gowans, *Images of American Living* (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott, 1964).

would tell the people of Portsmouth that Jacob Mott was one of them, just as though he lived as their next-door neighbour. (1977: 3)

Here the act of material production becomes the means through which meanings are inscribed in the material world. It is through the manipulation of artefact form that social ideas about the nature of the world, and one's place in it, are given material expression. Material culture becomes a kind of language: one which is both constructed by social agents, and which in turn constructs the framework of an ordered and meaningful world. The key to the development of Deetz's thinking was his acquaintance with the work of the folklorist Henry Glassie, whose *Folk Housing in Middle Virginia* (1975) was written in a tradition of high structuralism drawn directly from Levi-Strauss. Glassie devotes a section of his extensive bibliographic essay to structuralism in linguistics, anthropology and folklore. He discusses the work of Levi-Strauss in detail, but also cites Barthes, Chomsky, Jakobson and Leach, among others. Indeed, from this perspective it is a small step from Levi-Strauss's object-based structuralist analyses of cultural life, or Barthes's interpretations of the material debris of French popular culture, to the application of structuralist methodology to archaeological problems.

On the page following his description of the labour of Jacob Mott Deetz offers what is in effect a redefinition of archaeology, in line with this new understanding of material culture:

Archaeology is the study of past peoples based on the things they left behind and the ways they left their imprint on the world. Chipped-stone hand axes made hundreds of thousands of years ago and porcelain teacups from the eighteenth century carry messages from their makers and users. It is the archaeologists task to decode these messages and apply them to our understanding of the human experience. (1977: 4)⁶

⁶. Interestingly, Deetz is seldom cited by post-processual archaeologists, a victim of the schism between North American and British archaeologists. Nevertheless his achievement is a considerable one. In "Some Opinions About Recovering Mind" (1982) Leone comments: "Even though I tend to side more with a materialist strategy in archaeology, none of its achievements yet matches those of Glassie, and to a lesser degree, of Deetz" (746). Also see Klejn's (1977) comments. He writes of *Invitation to Archaeology*: "In Deetz's work, the development of the idea of structure as it applies to archaeology was particularly interesting and fresh. He realized literally the suggestion of Kluckhohn that the methods of structural linguistics be carried over to the analysis of the relation between the formal and functional characteristics of archaeological material" (1977: 10. This refers to a statement by Kluckhohn in a

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The Post-Processual Challenge.

In fact, the history of archaeology's engagement with the idea of language dates back to the 1960s. Hodder begins the chapter called "Structuralist archaeology" in *Reading the Past* (1994) by noting that: "When Edmund Leach (1973) suggested that archaeology would soon turn from functionalism to structuralism, following the path of social anthropology, he was clearly unaware that structuralist archaeology already existed" (35). The work that Hodder is referring to is Leroi-Gourhan's structuralist analysis of Paleolithic cave art, a pathbreaking study in the mould of Levi-Strauss⁷. However, Bapty and Yates have noted of Leroi-Gourhan (and the Swedish archaeologist Jarl Nordbradh who likewise experimented with a structuralist methodology) that "neither had any widespread effect even within their own institutional systems, and on an international scale they worked largely in isolation" (1990: 2). Rather it is to British archaeology that one must look in marking archaeological theory's engagement with the literary end of social theory, and to developments in the early 1980s, many of them associated with Hodder himself.

A number of events were important in the founding of post-processual archaeology. One of these was the "Symbolism and Structuralism in Archaeology" conference held

paper to the International Congress of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences, 1956, to the effect that an attempt should be made to find in the conceptual apparatus of cultural anthropology elementary units, independent of culture, comparable to phonemes and morphemes).

⁷. See Leone's discussion of Leroi-Gourhan in "Some Opinions About Recovering Mind" (1982). Leone comments: "Leroi-Gourhan took the whole corpus of cave art in space and suggested a universality of organization that had not been conceived before. He suggested that regardless of date, place, or variants in items painted, the art was ultimately a unity" (743). However, the weaknesses of Leroi-Gourhan's method is ultimately the weakness of structuralism in general. Chief among these is its problem with diachronic change. Leone comments: "To perform such an analysis Leroi-Gourhan had to take much of Western Europe over a 10 000 year period and analyse its art as a potentially unified entity. Such an analysis could not attempt to account for, and probably could not even have recognized, differences in place or time" (744). Like other structuralist studies "such analysis presumes that the basic organization, or structure, of a culture is continuous".

at Cambridge in 1980. The conference proceedings were collected in a volume entitled *Symbolic and Structural Archaeology* (1982), containing papers by many archaeologists who would become the household names of post-processual archaeology. The importance of these events lies in the fact that they issued a clear challenge to processual archaeology and the old orthodoxy. The frontispiece from *Symbolic and Structural Archaeology* is an amusing take-off of Rembrandt's "The Anatomy Lecture". Lewis Binford, surgeon at "Southampton General", reaches into his bag of "scientific tools and methods" to take the temperature of a figure prostrated on a bed (Hodder). The inscription reads: " L.R. Binford applies the Middle Range Theory Thermometer to "Hodderism", and finds the temperature a little high... he prescribes Anti-Paradigm tablets".

Another landmark was the publication in 1987 of Michael Shanks and Christopher Tilley's two works, *Re-Constructing Archaeology* and *Social Theory and Archaeology*, which effectively inaugurate a post-structuralist archaeology. Hodder contributes the foreword to *Re-Constructing Archaeology*. It is notable both for its enthusiastic endorsement of their work, and for the sense that it points the direction for future developments in archaeological theory. Hodder writes:

This book breaks ground in a number of ways. It is therefore not surprising that the text introduces concepts to which the archaeological ear is unaccustomed. This difficulty should not dissuade us from grappling with the challenge. For this is an extremely important book which issues in a new generation of archaeology - a new age of a philosophically informed and critically aware discipline. (xv)

He continues:

One reason why this book is demanding to read is that it suddenly asks archaeologists to catch up. Having for so long been content with a limited theoretical field and having only recently begun to grapple with structuralism and limited aspects of contemporary Marxism, the archaeologist is now asked to jump beyond structuralism to post-structuralism, and to consider also critical theory, hermeneutics, phenomenology, and realist and post-positivist philosophy. I am not sure that archaeology as a whole will be able quickly and effectively to enter the debate, and in a sense the book may be before, or out of, its time... But what the book does do, courageously, is to set us a target. Shanks and Tilley offer an integration of a variety of contemporary social theories in relation to archaeological data. In trying to understand what they have done, our own level of debate is raised. That this is a demanding book

should not dismay us. Our task over the next decade is to educate ourselves so that we can read this book. (xv)

Other works followed in the new genre. A volume called *Archaeology After Structuralism; Post-structuralism and the Practice of Archaeology* edited by Bapty and Yates appeared in 1990. They begin their introductory essay by noting that: "Nearly a decade has passed since the symbolic and structural archaeology conference announced a coherent challenge to the existing paradigmatic and epistemological structure of archaeology" (1). They have a nice line on the effects of these developments: "Almost overnight, the bright young things of the New Archaeology - these Binfords, these Renfrews, these Schiffers - were transformed from the avant-garde into the old guard" (2).

A key metaphor for post-processual archaeology has been the idea of "reading" the archaeological record. Tilley edited a collection of essays called *Reading Material Culture; Structuralism, Hermeneutics and Post-Structuralism* (1990). His own *Material Culture and Text; The Art of Ambiguity* was published in 1991. This latter contains a striking echo of Deetz. In a chapter called "Locating a Grammar" he writes:

The important point to be made here is that speech, phonetic writing and material culture all involve a similar materialist practice: they are all transformations of a primordial human practice, variations on the same theme, sharing common qualities. All are fundamentally to do with communication between persons and the creating of meaning. Material culture is "written" through a practice of spacing and differentiation in just the same manner as phonetic writing. Both result in the material fixation of meaning which, by contrast to speech, is indirectly communicated in the sense that I decorate a pot by dividing up the empty space of the clay or write a letter by inscribing marks on a blank sheet of paper and at the same time in the future you read and interpret the visual medium, able by virtue of the material fixation to read what I have produced. (16-17)

Hodder's own *Reading the Past; Current approaches to interpretation in archaeology* (1994 [1986]) has emerged as a key text in the post-processual tradition. In the same vein, the volume edited by Hodder for the *One World Archaeology* series is called *The Meaning of Things; Material culture and symbolic expression* (1989).

The Treasure-house of Theory.

The importance of these developments in post-processual archaeology lies in the fact that they opened the resources of social theory to archaeologists. Making the equation between material culture and language - a move which marks the founding strategy of structuralist and post-structuralist archaeologies - allowed archaeologists to take their place at the table of theory, to enter and partake. At a stroke archaeology was propelled into the mainstream of theoretical development in the twentieth-century. From being an outcast and an anomaly, existing in a state of self-imposed exile, archaeology joined the rest of the social sciences in their absorbing interest in the idea of language.

There followed an exciting and theoretically innovative period as a small group of archaeologists gathered under the label of post-processual archaeology plundered the resources of social theory and looked for potential applications of the new ideas to archaeological problems. *Reading Material Culture* contains essays on Levi-Strauss, Paul Ricoeur, Clifford Geertz, Barthes, Derrida and Foucault. *Archaeology After Structuralism* also contains essays on Derrida and Foucault, but extends this engagement to include Gilles Deleuze, Julia Kristeva and Jacques Lacan. In the words of its editors "the stock and standard names are there to be found", but it also contains "extensive references to Freud, Marcuse and Nietzsche, to Marxists like Louis Althusser and Pierre Macherey, to anthropologists like Gregory Bateson, to novelists like Jorge Luis Borges, Angela Carter and Franz Kafka" (3).

At the same time these developments had the effect of pushing the boundaries of the discipline which now became identified with the more embracing notion of material culture, rather than the artefacts of antiquity. A number of papers sought to analyse the social relations of material culture, often in seemingly unlikely locations. My personal favourite is a paper by Hodder entitled "Bow ties and pet foods: material culture and the negotiation of change in British industry" (1987)⁸. The abstract describes the paper as "An archaeological study of the involvement of material culture, including bow ties, in negotiating the changes in a particular pet food factory... Bow ties were worn at a certain stage in the company's history. Their introduction and removal were part of a negotiation process in which management

⁸. This in a collection, also edited by Hodder, called *The Archaeology of Contextual Meanings*.

tried to change the attitudes of the work force and in which shop-floor workers developed their own view of and hold over management" (11).

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Post-Processual Theory and South African Archaeology.

More recently, post-processual theory has made an appearance in South African archaeology. These developments are associated in particular with Martin Hall and his graduate students at the University of Cape Town, but also with David Lewis-Williams and an influential school of rock-art interpretation based at the University of the Witwatersrand. A string of publications through the 1990s mark Hall's growing engagement with post-processualism, in his chosen field of Historical Archaeology. In a paper called "Fish and the Fisherman: art, text and archaeology" (1991) Hall shows how qualitatively different strands of evidence can be "read" in parallel. These strands of evidence are, respectively, views of street scenes in nineteenth-century Cape Town by the artists Thomas Bowler and Charles D'Oyly, and archaeological assemblages excavated from a series of inner-city back yards (in Sea Street, Bree Street and Barrack Street). He writes:

In this paper I argue for an alternative form of explanation, one that treats the past as a set of complex texts, intertwined to form a discourse. This is of course, not original: Foucault and post-structuralist semiotics have had a wide ranging impact in other disciplines. But in archaeology, the value of not privileging written documents over the archaeological record, or artefact assemblages over other sources of information, has yet to be appreciated. (1)

A 1992 paper by Hall with the imposing title of ""Small Things" and the "Mobile, Conflictual Fusion of Power, Fear and Desire"" is situated squarely within the post-processual tradition⁹. He begins:

In this paper, I am concerned with the interpretation of the past as texts, and the manner in which these texts are intertwined as discourses. I argue that the material world can be seen as "texts without words", and therefore particularly powerful in its meanings. (373)

⁹. This paper is in a collection edited by Anne Yentsch and Mary Beaudry called *The Art and Meaning of Historical Archaeology; Essays in Honor of James Deetz* (1992).

Here again, Hall's concern is in the interplay between "the material world" and "the verbal world". He writes:

By finding the disjunctures in written accounts, and setting these against archaeological evidence, it is possible to use the material world to interpret the verbal world, and the verbal world to interpret the material world. (373)

From a theoretical point of view the interest of this paper is that it more clearly accomplishes the transition from a structuralist to a post-structuralist methodology. In what amounts to a symbolic tipping of the hat to the North American contexts from which the current phase of Historical Archaeology is derived, he opens with an example from the Virginia Tidewater (Westover, the country seat of one William Byrd), before turning his attention to colonial Cape Town. In another first for Historical Archaeology, Hall finishes up with a consideration of the work of the literary theorist Mikhail Bakhtin (this is in a section called "The World Turned Upside Down"). The phrase "the mobile, conflictual fusion of power, fear and desire" comes from a work by Peter Stallybrass and Alon White called *The Politics and Poetics of Transgression* (1986), written in the mould of Bakhtin.

"Tales and Heads; Bodies and Landscapes" (1993) is a post-structuralist reading of the meaning of the Lydenburg heads, and their re-working by the South African artist Malcolm Payne in the so-called Mafikeng heads. Hall begins in his usual forthright manner, this time with an echo of Miller (1987):

This essay is about the way in which things - tangible, material objects - are invested with meaning. As a field of enquiry this is at once strangely under-theorized and impossibly vast, ranging across phenomenology, art history, ethnology, archaeology and a host of more closely defined intellectual specialisms. (2)

In a move which presages his later work on the "Lost City" he sets the heads in two contexts: "the high colonial mythologies of the late nineteenth century" and the "biblical founding tales upon which they were based" (2); and interpretations of South Africa's Iron Age and the notions of tribalism and ethnicity that underlie them. The unique and ambiguous conjunction of the heads derives from their situation between these contexts (Hall describes them as "decapitated").

Patricia Davidson was one of Hall's graduate students. Her doctoral thesis, *Material Culture, Context and Meaning; A critical investigation of museum practice with particular reference to the South African Museum* (1991), sets out in a post-processual way to "elucidate the relationship between material culture and social relations" (abstract). She draws on Anthony Giddens and Pierre Bourdieu in constructing a theoretical approach around the concept of "recontextualization", which she describes as a pivotal process in both archaeology and museum practice. This is then applied in field studies in the Transkei and the Transvaal Lowveld, and in the ethnographic section of the South African Museum.

The title of Yvonne Brink's doctoral thesis is *Places of Discourse and Dialogue: a study in the material culture of the Cape during the rule of the Dutch East India Company, 1652-1795* (1992). This is principally a study of an architectural tradition, the so-called "Cape Dutch" style. Her concern is to move "away from the shapes of the dwellings to the people who changed them". This involves a complimentary shift "away from formalism to post-structuralist theory", which she describes as "discourse theory, literary criticism, feminism" (abstract). Her particular interest is in a group of free citizens or *burghers* who established a position independent of the structures of the Dutch East India Company (she calls them "people out of place").

In many ways Brink's thesis is a quintessentially post-processual work. Her real concern is with theory itself, and to this end her work represents a passionate and lively engagement with the resources of post-structuralism. Some of her chapter headings are memorable: "Artefacts as Texts: A Cape Colonial Discourse of Dwelling", "Hermeneutics and Historical Archaeology", "The Theory and Practice of Visiting", and "Intertextuality and the Discourse of Dwelling". In constructing a theoretical approach Brink draws principally on the discourse theory of Paul Ricoeur, but she also mentions Stallybrass and White, Bakhtin, Barthes, Catherine Belsey, Bourdieu, Foucault, Eagleton, Jonathan Culler and Jean Francois Lyotard. She is quite clear about the nature of this appropriation: "I do not... slavishly apply these theories to a special kind of text for which they were not in the first place designed. I use then, rather, as a basis upon which to structure a modified theoretical framework for historical archaeology" (6-7).

Anne Solomon calls her doctoral thesis *Rock Art Incorporated: an archaeological and interdisciplinary study of certain human figures in San art* (1995). It comprises a revisionist study of San rock art, in which she takes on the shamanistic model of rock

art interpretation. The particular focus of her research is a recurrent motif in the art, a figure shown in frontal perspective with splayed legs and raised arms "and one or more combinations of the following characteristics: swollen bodies; sticks, bows or crescent shaped objects held aloft; and a genital emission or emphasis" (130), the so-called "mythic women" figures. Like Brink she is centrally concerned with issues of theory, and her interest extends to contemporary theories concerning temporality and embodiment (Foucault, Bourdieu); hermeneutic approaches to interpretation; and an engagement with the feminist archaeologies of Margaret Conkey and Alison Wiley.

Picnic With Dingaan.

My own engagement with post-processual archaeology dates back to the late 1980s. I brought out two seminar papers in this mould at an early date, in some ways presaging subsequent developments in this direction in South African archaeology. The first was a parallel study of the celebrations to mark the 150th anniversary of the Great Trek, and a movement in Afrikaner rock music which flowered briefly in the late 1980s as a challenge to apartheid (the self-styled *Alternatiewe Afrikaaner Musiek Beweging*, or Alternative Afrikaner Music Movement)¹⁰. The interest of these moments in popular culture from a material cultural point of view was that in both cases the sacred symbols of Afrikanerdom were extensively and self-consciously displayed. In the case of the Great Trek celebrations they were mobilized as an affirmation of the core ideological values of Afrikanerdom and apartheid. In the case of the rock musicians, these same symbols were inverted to radically subvert these values.

The trek celebrations were marked by a certain amount of bathos. Their most visible symbol was a staged re-enactment of the various routes of the Great Trek itself. The wagon of the cultural arm of the ruling Nationalist Party was to be drawn by a team of oxen thousands of kilometres from town to town, preceded by a constant shift of youths who would march ahead of the wagon. The trek began bravely, however after two weeks of travelling in this manner, the difficulties of conveying an ox-wagon over tarred roads proved insurmountable. For the next few months the oxen and wagon were transported by truck to be offloaded for a symbolic procession and civic reception at each town on route. The wagon of the far-right wing *Afrikaner*

¹⁰. "Ox-wagons and Rock Musicians: Moments in Afrikaner Civil Religion" (1989).

Weerstandse Beweging (Afrikaner Resistance Movement) was the only one to physically traverse the landscape. Shunning oxen, the wagon was hand-drawn by a team of AWB stalwarts all the way from Bloodriver in Natal to Pretoria¹¹.

The musicians of the AAMB filled their stages with the paraphernalia of Afrikaner nationalism - the proteas, sunbonnets and powder-horns - this time deployed in a heavily ironised context. One of the earliest collaborations of the AAMB was a musical called *Piekniek by Dingaan* (Picnic with Dingaan) which first appeared at the Grahamstown festival. At the time Frans le Roux reviewed it for the *Weekly Mail*, making the most of the symbolic ties between these two events in Afrikaner civil religion. He wrote:

The commemoration of the Great Trek was a tedious historical pageant which turned into the spectacle of the year - with shades of Absurd theatre.

Earlier in the year Afrikaans counter-culture had its most impressive *saamtrek* on another hill, in the shadow of the 1820 Settlers Monument....

The crowd at the Voortrekker Monument on December 16 celebrated Dingaan's defeat at Blood River. *Piekniek by Dingaan*, by contrast, sought to heal the racial rift emphasised by the celebration at the Voortrekker Monument.

These two festivals on two separate hills are symptomatic of a schism in Afrikanerdom: some Afrikaners are trying to uphold and justify their version of Afrikaner history, while a whole new movement of Afrikaans dramatists is seeking to undermine and demythologise that version of history.¹²

This spirit of ironic subversion extended to the names they gave themselves. The foremost band of the AAMB was the *Gereformeerde* Blues Band (Reformed Blues Band), named in parody of the reformed church movement in South Africa. The musicians called themselves Johannes Kerkorrel (literally, John Church-organ), Bernoldus Niemand (Bernard No-body), Koos Kombuis ("Koos" Kitchen) and Dagga-Dirk Uys (Dirk Uys is an Afrikaner folk hero). A single image perfectly captures the point that I set out to make in the paper: a group of musicians position themselves in front of a mural of an ox-wagon, but it is like no ox-wagon that we have ever seen - a

¹¹. Images of the celebrations surrounding the trek re-enactments were brilliantly and movingly captured by the photographer Gideon Mendel. I owe a great deal of my reconstruction of the various treks to these images.

¹². *Weekly Mail* 4(46), 1988.

dayglo, spitfire ox-wagon painted in psychedelic colours, with smoke and sparks coming out the back.

I suggested that the final meaning of these events comes when they are set in the context of South Africa in the mid-1980s, the years of the township revolts and the States of Emergency. In a context of censorship and state repression the AAMB were able to mount a subtle and embracing critique of Afrikaner nationalism using the silent language of material symbols.

Mandela/ Messiah.

My second paper was written as a companion piece to the first and concerned Nelson Mandela's visit to the United States in June 1990, shortly after his release from prison¹³. I happened to be in the U.S. during that period and was struck by the spirit of millenarianism which greeted Mandela, especially among African-Americans. It was a visit marked by extraordinary scenes and public spectacles. New York declared it Nelson Mandela Week and children from the city's public schools were given the day off. The Empire State Building was lit in the colours of the ANC. On the day of his arrival Mandela was given a ticker-tape parade down New York's Canyon of Heroes. From a bullet-proof glass box on the back of a flatbed truck he waved continuously to a crowd estimated at up to a million people. On the streets and in the news it was "V-Day all over again" (*The Daily Mail* June 20, 1990). According to one report: "The city ate him up. TV stations ditched prime-time programming to follow him. Tabloid newspapers went mad with purple prose, reporting eruptions of ecstasy" (*Cape Times* June 25, 1990).

In this paper I signalled the beginnings of a departure from a post-processual focus on meaning, to a more broadly-phrased concern with materiality. What interested me was the particular meanings and potencies which accrued around the physical person of Nelson Mandela. African Americans received him as "the living symbol of the anti-apartheid struggle" (*The New York Times* June 24, 1990), and as "the figure who contained within his body the struggle, sacrifice, and ultimate triumph of black South Africans" (*Vrye Weekblad* June 29, 1990). Welcoming Mandela to Atlanta, the

¹³. The paper's title is "Amandla/Mandela/Messiah/America". It was given as a seminar in the Centre for African Studies as part of the Africa Seminar series on 3 April 1991.



New York greets Nelson Mandela (source: *The Daily Mail* June 20, 1990).

Rev. Joseph Lowery, president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, said: "We are here to receive our hero, to hail a man who gives flesh to the struggle against apartheid in South Africa - and against the apartheid mentality in south Georgia and America" (*The Tennessean* June 28, 1990)¹⁴.

A frequently expressed wish was the desire to touch Mandela as a way of partaking in the sacred significance of the moment. With reference to this phenomenon I wrote:

In the working of this symbolic machine it is Mandela's body which bridges the gap between continents. The body of Mandela has acted as an objective correlative of black experience; from his years underground and the regimes of military training, to the manacles and the grim regimes of Robben Island, the body of Mandela, in its discomfort, in its confinement, in its release, has actualized the metaphorical complexes of black resistance and black suffering.... This iconic status as an embodiment of the suffering and the struggle for black liberation has imbued Mandela's flesh with a startling symbolic potency. And black Americans responded to this in a sensual way, in wanting to touch him, to see and to feel his presence: "Everyone wanted a piece of the action, to hug [Mandela] or touch the hem of his dashiki" (*The Daily Mail* June 20, 1990). According to one observer: "It's as if this trip has a deep religious significance ... people think that if they touch him or kiss his ring they'll be healed" (*The Daily Mail* June 20, 1990). Coretta Scott King said of the Mandela visit: "Now we have the physical manifestations as we can touch and feel the people who have been involved in the struggle and they can feel us" (*The New York Times* June 17, 1990). (12)

What this points to is not so much the play of meaning across a range of material symbols, as the power of materiality itself as manifested in the person of Mandela. Finally, what interested me was the "surplus" of energy and emotion which orthodox accounts seemed unable to explain. To appreciate these events fully, I suggested, demanded an archaeological approach:

The explicit political message of Mandela's visit to the United States was a call for the maintenance of sanctions. Even at the time this seemed narrowly focussed. As one commentator said: "It is as if the Second Coming were devoted to pressing Rome for the recall of Pontius Pilate" (*International Herald Tribune* June 20-July 1, 1990). And indeed the "real" significance of Mandela's visit and its lasting influence was being played out elsewhere, in a "buried" discourse which was revealed both more deeply and more shallowly than this explicit call. More shallowly, in the surface of things, in style, in the beads and robes that black Americans wore to greet Mandela (or as Dick Hebdige has

¹⁴. The Southern Christian Leadership Conference was founded by King in the 1950s.

put it "... the hidden messages inscribed in code on the glossy surfaces of style" 1979: 18). And more deeply, in the metaphors, allusions and symbolic constructs through which black Americans interpreted the events of those 10 days and played them back to themselves. It is to this buried discourse that one must look to account for the emotion, the sense of renewal and the sense of personal identification with which black Americans greeted Mandela - that is, to account for those things which will be most remembered by the people who were part of these events. (20-21)

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Discussion and Comments.

There are a number of points that I would like to make about the direction that theory in archaeology has taken over the period under review. Some of these are of a general nature. Others relate more specifically to the relation between metropolitan and colonial or post-colonial archaeologies.

I. Permission to Speak.

My first point concerns the nature of the debate in archaeology and the location of its interlocutors. Is it open? Is it closed? Who has the right to intervene as the debate unfolds?

From the perspective of a Third World archaeologist it is clear that the debate around archaeological theory happens elsewhere. It has always slightly amused me that I should be steeped in a subject which is so physically and intellectually removed. I read such books and journals as the library acquires, like a correspondence pupil or a poor relation in the colonies. I have never met Michael Shanks or Chris Tilley, have no idea what Danny Miller looks like. And yet I have heard Edward Said and Frederic Jameson lecture, and have been to seminars by Terry Eagleton and Anthony Appiah. Hodder makes the point that archaeological theory has been the preserve of an exclusive and tightly defined group. Shanks, Tilley, Hodder himself - and before them David Clarke and Grahame Clark - archaeologists who "cover[ed] a range of different theoretical positions through time, were or are all associated with Peterhouse - one small, reactionary, exclusive college in Cambridge" (1991: 9). If

anything, post-processual archaeology has intensified this trend towards a clubby elite. The bi-polar North Atlantic exchanges of processual archaeology - one thinks of Binford and Clarke both bringing out landmark publications in 1968 - have been replaced by an even smaller set of exchanges among a group of British archaeologists, who very largely set the terms and define the topics of debate¹⁵.

In a recent interview Martin Hall repeatedly expressed his own frustration with the nature of debate in archaeological theory, and the difficulty that he found as an archaeologist working in the Third World in making significant interventions (pers. comm. February 1997). In this colonial model of archaeological practice the task of archaeologists in the Third World is humbly to follow where others lead, to grapple with the new ideas as some of us have done, and breathlessly to await the next instalment.

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II. The Cult of Theory.

My second point concerns the excessively abstruse nature of much post-processual theory. Writing theory in archaeology has become a specialization in its own right, demanding a high degree of acquaintance with a baffling array of texts and ideas. One of the discipline's inherent problems is that any fool can dig a hole in the ground, and speculate as to their findings. Archaeologists have always needed to demonstrate their professionalism in overt ways. The New Archaeology sought to do this methodologically, by borrowing a nicely-judged array of jargon and techniques from the hard sciences. The talk of formation processes and the search for covering laws marked off the critical distance between archaeologists on the one hand, and pot-hunters and treasure-seekers on the other. In post-processual archaeology it is theory itself which has become the badge of our exclusivity. Theorists have become the high priests of the discipline, who intercede on behalf of ordinary mortals with the mysteries of the social sciences. Yoffee and Sherratt have a nice line on this in their critical and ironic introductory essay to a volume called *Archaeological theory: who sets the agenda?* (1993). They describe post-processual archaeologists as being

¹⁵. Clarke's *Analytical Archaeology* appeared in 1968, as did an important volume edited by S.R. and L.R. Binford called *New Perspectives in Archaeology*.

"kindly dedicated to bringing various post-modern writers into the purview of their less up-to-date archaeological brethren and sistren" (5).

One consequence of this growing trend towards specialization is a growing split between theory and practice. As post-processualists have taken off on their tour of the wilder fringes of post-structuralist theory many archaeologists have simply opted out. Richard Bradley writes in an essay in the same volume called "Archaeology: the loss of nerve" (in which he begins with the memorable idea that archaeological theory's "loss of innocence" has turned into a "loss of nerve") that: "archaeological activity is in danger of polarizing, with one faction who hold onto the methods and aspirations of the scientist, and another who are engaged in fervent introspection and regard this aspiration to scientific method as a political position in itself" (132). In practice this has had the effect of leaving the discipline under-theorised, as the increasing rarefication of theoretical debate has left behind most archaeologists. The practical men and women of the discipline, who will always outnumber the rest, have resolved simply to carry on in the old way. At my home university it is still possible to major in archaeology without brushing up against archaeological theory at any stage in the three year degree. My own under-graduate acquaintance with theory came about through chance. Both James Deetz and Mark Leone happened to visit and teach courses at UCT in my senior years (this was in the late 1980s in defiance of the academic boycott). In the discipline at large post-processual archaeology has done nothing to ease a general anti-theoreticism. Rather the reverse, as hard-bitten practitioners gloomily contemplate yet another paper which wittily dissects the pronouncements of Foucault or Derrida.

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III. Theory at Play.

A second consequence has been a trivialising strain in post-processual theory. Despite an admirably expressed desire to engage with the major social and political currents of our time (capitalism, mass consumption), in practice post-processual archaeologists have shown an attraction for the quirky and the obscure. The iconic instance of this phenomenon is Shanks and Tilley's exhaustive study of the design of British and Swedish beer cans, which they offer us in *Re-Constructing Archaeology*. Philip Kohl complains in an essay called "Limits to a post-processual archaeology

(or, The dangers of a new scholasticism)" (1993) of "how trivial our sense of problem has become" (16). He writes of the "choice of fundamentally irrelevant, at times even ludicrous, subjects for analysis", and complains that post-processual archaeology can seem "absurdly academic". He writes:

Phrasing this even more critically, it seems to me that the intellectual game-playing quotient (or sophistry) of post-processual archaeology, at this stage at any rate, is even higher than that which characterized the early writings of the first generation of new archaeologists. Whether questioning the food-sharing proclivities of our Plio-Pleistocene ancestors or sniffing around F. Bordes... Binford, at least initially, addressed major problems in prehistory. (16)

In playful mood himself Kohl concludes his paper with a memorable analogy:

When I was asked to write this paper in 1988 on theory in post-processual archaeology, I thought of medieval scholastic philosophy - the fellows who sometimes debated the number of angels who could fit on the head of a pin - as a potential source of fruitful analogy with contemporary Anglo-American archaeology. (19)

He writes: "It would be fun to pursue this metaphor further, almost certain to irritate and estrange, I would love to sharpen my pen and proceed". However, perhaps charitably, he decides not to.

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IV. The Politics of Interpretation.

My fourth point concerns the epistemological basis of post-processual archaeology. Just as the New Archaeology was founded on a positivist theory of knowledge and an optimistic assessment of powers of science, so post-processual archaeology has argued for a general anti-positivism. It has come down on the side of multi-vocality, multiple interpretations, and an openness to competing knowledge claims. This was seen as an important step in moving away from an untenable philosophical position (positivism) and an authoritarian model of academic practice.

However, this refusal to be held to a single interpretive position can be argued to have adverse consequences for Third World and post-colonial archaeologies. Some

theorists have seen it as nothing more than the latest of a long line of bids to maintain cultural and philosophical hegemony in the West. To develop this point I shall refer to an important paper by Hodder called "Interpretive Archaeology and its Role" which appeared in 1991. In this paper Hodder is in revisionist mode, critically assessing much of what he had helped to put in place. He begins by noting that "much post-processual archaeology has avoided an interpretive position" (8). The influence of post-structuralism in post-processual archaeology has been "towards multivocality and the dispersal of meaning" (9). Furthermore, its characteristic concerns (with "power, negotiation, text, intertext, structure, ideology, agency, and so on") represent the interests of a predominantly Western, white, male discourse" (8); as does its concern with abstract theory. In general post-processual archaeology has shown an inadequate concern with the contexts of archaeological practice, and what Hodder calls "internal meanings". He writes of the abstract nature of theory in post-processual archaeology: "The practical result of purely theoretical debate tends to be posturing". Debate "tends to be confrontational by nature. Argument is over the top of, rather than through the data that becomes relevant only as examples. The argument is entirely about the present, not about the past" (8). He argues that "as a result, as radical as post-processual archaeology would claim to be, it merely reestablishes older structures of archaeological research" - a surprising admission, and one which is not without its irony.

For one thing, "the new theories and the new ways of writing them often serve to make archaeological texts more obscure and difficult for anyone but the highly trained theorists to decipher" (9). He asks: "How can alternative groups have access to a past that is locked up both intellectually and institutionally?". Later he identifies these "alternative groups" when he writes of the "dialogue between "scientific" and American Indian, black, feminist, etc. interests" (9). However, the heart of his argument lies in describing a situation whereby a nonhermeneutic, post-structuralist position is mobilized against the interests of non-Western groups. He writes of the potential loss of authority faced by theorists in the West:

Dominant theorists and specialists have, since the excited certainties of the 1960s, increasingly lost the monopoly to define archaeological truths as alternative positions have been argued by women, ethnic minorities, and by all the different perspectives in archaeological theory, never mind all the fringe archaeologies. (9)

He notes that "... the poststructuralist response to this loss of authority is subtle". What it does, in effect, is to throw the entire system into doubt. Rather like a petulant child who tips the chess-board rather than lose the game, it declares the invalidity of any philosophical system founded on a notion of authentic value. Hodder writes:

The notion that truth and knowledge are contingent and multiple undermines the claims of subordinate groups. It disempowers them by alienating them from the reality they experience. Irony and relativism appear as intellectual possibilities for dominating groups at the point where the hegemony and universality of views is being challenged. (9)

The effect is to "subtly disempower... critique" (10). It establishes the hegemony of a new kind of (Western) knowledge. Like his or her work the post-structuralist critic is "fragmented, distanced, uncommitted, disengaged; powerful but always absent and therefore not answerable to criticism" (9). Rather than engage, it makes a virtue of disengaging¹⁶.

What Hodder has done, that is to say, is to link post-structuralist post-processual archaeology to a broader set of developments in theory in the West. Post-structuralism arose at precisely that point at which radical non-Western, anti-colonial voices had begun to assert themselves, and to assert the right of an alternative philosophical universe based on a rival set of values and concerns. The urgency and passion of such appeals have been met by ironic evasion, by a prankish refusal to get serious, by a spirit of carnival and burlesque. From this perspective Shanks and Tilley's beer cans, Hodder's bow-ties, and let it be said, my own concern with ox-wagons and rock musicians - interesting and enlivening as such studies may be -

¹⁶. Hodder draws on two sources in constructing his argument. The first is a paper by Mascia-Lees, Sharpe and Cohen called "The Postmodernist Turn in Anthropology" (1989). The second is Eagleton's chapter on Post-structuralism in *Literary Theory* (1983). Eagleton takes us back to the context of the late 1960s, and the founding of post-structuralism against the backdrop of the Parisian Students' Revolt and the war in Vietnam. He notes that: "In one of its developments, post-structuralism became a convenient way of evading such political questions altogether. The work of Derrida and others cast grave doubt upon the classical notions of truth, reality, meaning and knowledge, all of which could be exposed as resting on a naively representational theory of language... If reality was constructed by our discourse rather than reflected by it, how could we ever know reality itself, rather than merely knowing our own discourse? Was all talk just about our talk? Did it make sense to claim that one interpretation of reality, history or the literary text was "better" than another? " (143-4).

represent the efforts of theorists at play in the rubble of a system, while the big issues have somehow slipped beyond our purview¹⁷.

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In the place of such an archaeology Hodder advocates what he calls an "interpretive postprocessual archaeology" (7), which he rests on three legs. The first is a "guarded objectivity" in approaching the past. He writes that this "needs to be retained so that subordinate groups can use the archaeological past to empower their knowledge claims in the present and to differentiate their claims from fringe, ungrounded archaeologies" (10). The second is the use of hermeneutic procedures in interpretation. This involves a "move away from an assumption of the primacy of theory towards relating theory to data as part of a learning process" (10). The third leg is a reflexive concern with the social contexts of archaeological practice. This "will lead to a critical engagement with the voicing of other interests, by identifying the causes for which the past is constructed" (10). Above all it represents a return to a kind of anterior function of the archaeologist which has been lost sight of, the archaeologist as story-teller: an "interpretive archaeology is about constructing narratives, or telling stories" (13).

¹⁷. Hodder is not alone in condemning the political implications of post-processual archaeology's refusal to take an interpretive position, and a number of archaeologists have since weighed in with similar criticisms. In their introductory essay to *Archaeological theory: who sets the agenda?* (1993) Yoffee and Sherratt write: "the branch of post-processualism that argues that there are multiple versions of the past and that all or many of them might be equally valid... contradicts the important call to political action by archaeologists". They continue: "archaeologists today cannot afford multiple versions of the past to proliferate. Rather it is critical that archaeologists assert that there is at least a partially knowable antiquity and that archaeologists are the guardians of its integrity" (7). In similar vein Chippendale writes in the same volume of the "intellectual supermarket in the west, its shelves crammed with brightly packed ideas to be taken away by the trolley-full, played with, and discarded". He writes: "Central Europe saw smaller, barer shelves, as it suffered harder times. Yet precious ideas, and respect for those ideas which are good, provided a moral strength that in the end brought down the Communist occupation of the central European countries and installed an intellectual... briefly as one of its presidents" (35). For similar views see the essays by Murray, Wylie and Kohl in the same volume.

The notion of an "interpretive archaeology" signals a new and more critical phase in post-processual archaeology. Hodder's paper has been followed by a volume, *Interpreting Archaeology; Finding meaning in the past* (1995, edited by Hodder *et al*), which further develops the idea. At the same time it signals a new openness in post-processual archaeology to other perspectives. In their introduction the editors write:

This book is about the state of the discipline in the 1990s. It is a perspective of Anglo-American archaeology, but one which has an eye also on other parts of the world, and one which is prepared to shift with new outlooks and learn new ways of thinking [about] the material past in the present. (1)

One of the interesting dynamics to watch for will be the manner in which an interpretive archaeology engages with the notion of a post-colonial archaeology.

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V. The Object as Object.

For my final point I return to the theoretical contexts which I began this chapter by describing. In certain areas the gains of structuralist and post-structuralist archaeologies have been great, but they have been achieved through a kind of deception, by making the equation between material culture and language. On deeper reflection this equation seems forced and misleading. As I see it, it is the fundamental differences between material objects and words which make them such an unlikely source of analogy.

On the one hand material objects appear before us, as it were, in the full presence of their materiality. They are objects, possessing of form, mass, texture, colour and smell. They are reassuringly solid, just as they are indubitably there. Their appeal is to the surfaces of our own body: sensual rather than intellectual or cerebral. We touch them, eat them and smell them. We surround ourselves by them - live in, on and through them. What we appreciate is their constancy: some we take for granted, others are old friends. There is a kind of excess, a sprawling profligacy about the material world. Objects confront us in ever increasing numbers and variety. Efforts are made to curb them, to make them disappear, but they return in new form according to the constant laws of mass. How intimate and sensual is our relationship

with them; they awaken the body's appetites, all the dark cravings: lust, hunger, greed, sensual pleasure.

Compare this to the printed word, which so efficiently effaces its own materiality. Words appear to us as the minimum marks of difference, black figures on a white page. They operate according to principles which are mathematical and sequential, and demand a disciplined reaction. Their appeal is cerebral and intellectual rather than sensual: the eye, the brain, the hand. At the same time they are the very medium of social intercourse and intellectual activity. They rule us, stir our passions, separate us from the beasts, and are obsessively returned to as the means, end and object of academic life. They are everywhere and nowhere - the ultimate abstraction - unlike objects which are simply everywhere.

Words and objects appear as opposed principles, as philosophical Others, as the twin universes between which we maintain a precarious ascendancy. Objects may act as a form of language, conveying a complex range of social significations, but what ultimately defeats the analogy is what it is unable to accommodate, which is at the same time the most immediately striking aspect of any material object: the simple fact of its materiality. Treating material culture as language means forcing it into the mould of a kind of de-materialised reality. Saussure's founding gesture after all was to declare the insubstantial nature of the signifier - a mark with no meaning other than its difference from other such marks. This seems like a heavy price to pay, since I would argue that so much of the social meaning of material objects is, precisely, their materiality¹⁸.

My final point, then, with regard to theory in archaeology, is that it needs to move away from the inexact and ultimately misleading analogy between material culture and language to consider objects in their own right, as objects. The theoretical task

¹⁸. See the section in Bapty and Yates's introductory essay to *Archaeology After Structuralism* (1990) called "Materiality/ Textuality". They write: "Materiality is conventionally invoked by western metaphysics as a limiting principle - the principle of externality. Thus, for example, in contextual archaeology, the "material" model of material culture demarcates its limits as a purely discursive entity; the material is the "other" of the "discursive"" (27-8). Chippendale (1993) discusses the notion of "discrepancy" as it applies to the analogy between material culture and language. He writes that post-processualists "declare that artefacts are texts to be read, but they do not explain why artefacts and texts - which share so little in the way of observable characteristics - can or should be treated as if they are just the same thing" (32).

of coming to terms with the social implications of materiality is one which modern Western philosophy and social theory have left to one side, as both Eagleton and Miller have shown in their different ways. It leaves our version of contemporary reality curiously incomplete, gaping at precisely that point at which it comes up against the most palpable of worlds. What better place for a distinctly archaeological theory to begin? And what better discipline than archaeology - so centrally concerned with the social relation between people and things - to undertake it?

Doing this would entail boldly striking out on our own. It would mean overcoming what Chippendale has referred to as the habit of "deference" in archaeological theory (1993: 31) - that is, its excessive regard for theory imported from the other social sciences. One of the catch-words which has dogged archaeological theory is the phenomenon of "paradigm-lag", and just about every theorist worth their salt has a line on it. My favourites come from Clarke. In *Analytical Archaeology* (1968) he writes with typically caustic wit that:

The application of systems analysis and information theory to cultural situations raises a whole vista of interesting developments likely to impinge sooner or later on the dim and primitive consciousness of the archaeologist. (662)

In his 1973 "loss of innocence" paper he remarks that "the capacity of archaeology to reinvent for itself archaic explanation structures long abandoned in other fields is remarkable" (13).

An archaeological theory of the object as object has the potential to change all of this by making a genuinely original contribution to social theory. It would turn archaeology's ambiguous position in the social sciences from a liability into an asset, and a source of important insights. Already, I would argue, the signs are there of an increasing regard for the objective qualities of material objects. This regard is present in existing notions of embodiment, which have their origin in feminist theories; just as it is present in the discourse around product advertising. It is this latter, in particular, which has set about exploring in a practical way just the kind of relation which I have been describing.

Of all the work which I have reviewed it is a chapter in Miller's *Material Culture and Mass Consumption* (1991) called "The Humility of Objects" which comes closest to

thinking about objects in this way. In a section headed "The Artefact *Per Se*" he writes:

An analysis of the artefact must begin with its most obvious characteristic, which is that it exists as a physically concrete form independent of any individual's mental image of it. This factor may provide the key to understanding its power and significance in cultural construction. (99)

In a previous section headed "Objects as Language" he notes in common with my own comments in this chapter that one consequence of the pervasiveness of the idea of language in academic life has been its extension to the study of objects. However, he notes that "this extension took place at the expense of subordinating the object qualities of things to their word-like properties" (95-6). He continues: "In order to direct the discussion towards the particularity of the artefact form, rather than the mainly linguistic sign, artefacts need to be explicitly distinguished from language" (96). He sets about exploring the implications of these comments with considerable ingenuity, using amongst others in this chapter the work of Jean Piaget and Melanie Klein. Ultimately, however, Miller's work remains open-ended, and the theoretical explication of the object, considered as such, remains a task for the future¹⁹.

In the present work I have gone some way towards thinking about material objects in this way. In keeping with the interests of a post-colonial archaeology this has been mainly with regard to the social context and meaning of archaeology, particularly with respect to two topics: the construction of a national consciousness of the past and a sense of national identity, and the place of archaeology in education.

¹⁹. At one stage I was briefly tempted to undertake this task myself (see my unpublished long paper *Archaeology and the Limits of Theory*, 1993). My particular point of entry was an examination of West African fetish religion in the period of European contact and trade beginning in the fifteenth century. The interest of the fetish-idea is that it has its origins in the commercial relationship between developing mercantile economies in Europe and the section of the West African coast known as the Gold Coast (and later as the Slave Coast). In contrast to objects for trade, which became commodities defined by their exchange value, fetish objects were considered to be in a social relation to the people who made and wore them. Karl Marx was to famously take up this idea in his doctrine of the fetishism of commodities, which constitutes possibly the last major attempt in the traditions of Western social science to theorise material objects in relation to their social contexts.

VI. Theory and Post-Colonial Archaeology.

It remains to discuss archaeological theory in relation to the notion of a post-colonial archaeology. In the first place, a post-colonial archaeology is about opening-up theoretical debate in archaeology to competing claims and voices. It is about prising theory away from the small professional cliques in the West, and asserting the right of a range of neglected concerns and issues to be aired, discussed and debated. These are the concerns of archaeologists in the Third World, but they are also the concerns of the discipline as a whole.

In common with post-colonial theory in general it is about moving those silenced figures in the wings, if not to centre-stage, then at least on to the stage of theory. Neither is this done simply to correct an historical imbalance, but because what they have to say is important and worth hearing. One of the central themes of post-colonial theory is the manner in which the condition of marginality has been transformed from a debility to a situation of power, and a context which promises original insights. Instead of seeking to elide such differences, turning myself into a carbon-copy of a Cambridge-trained archaeologist, I freely admit the different histories, life-experiences and social forces which have created me. I proclaim them as a source of strength and interest. Furthermore, I believe that it is in remaining loyal to this experience that we see the generation of a new and worthwhile set of interests and concerns.

Very briefly, I would list the distinctive concerns of a post-colonial archaeological theory as consisting of the following: First and foremost, a concern with the social context and meaning of archaeological practice. For whom do we write? And on what basis: as collaborators or authorities, as paid professionals or committed intellectuals? If processual archaeologists paid very little attention to social context, believing the relationship between archaeologists and their material to be unproblematic and scientific in nature, then post-processual archaeology has directed attention to the person of the archaeological investigator him- or herself. They have correctly argued that an archaeologist's social context, translates into a set of beliefs, opinions and values, will inflect whatever interpretations emerge in their work.

A post-colonial archaeology needs to go one step further and to take into account the audience for which archaeologists write, making of processual archaeology's dyadic

relationship (archaeologist, archaeological material) and post-processual archaeology's triadic relationship (archaeologist, archaeological material, the personal context of the archaeologist) a four-way relationship between archaeologist, archaeological material, the personal context of the archaeologist, and the audience or social context in which they work. This added concern opens up a whole new arena of questions - questions, fundamentally, of the ownership and control of archaeological resources; and of the accountability and responsibility of archaeologists, towards the groups whose pasts they study and towards society at large.

In the second place a post-colonial archaeology needs to concern itself with the relation between metropolitan and peripheral archaeologies, or between the traditional centres of power in the discipline and their offshoots in the former colonies. What is the balance of power and influence? What is the direction of flow of ideas and resources? Do they energise and stimulate one another, or is their relation one of underdevelopment and exploitation?

In the third place I would like to return to a common-sense notion of theory. Rather than being a place to obfuscate, equivocate and score points, theory should be clarifying, comprehensible and practical. I like a conception of theory as a place where archaeologists think aloud, where - in the broadest and most congenial way - they make sense of it all. Theory needs to be seen for what it is: a reminder of the totality of archaeological thought; a reminder of broader social and historical contexts; and an indispensable adjunct to archaeological practice (rather than the other way around as some post-processual theory would seem to have it). To return to a previous notion, theory should not be the place where the discipline legitimates itself, through a kind of spurious intellectualism. Rather it legitimates itself through the integrity of its practice, and the extent to which it proves accountable to groups and interests outside the discipline. Only thus will we end the damaging split between theory and practice, and usher in that phase which Clarke announced with hopelessly premature optimism in 1973, the phase of a mature, responsible and theoretically informed discipline.

I shall return to each of these points in more detail. For the moment I need to root this enquiry more firmly in my native soil by adopting an historical approach, and examining the relationship between archaeology and apartheid.

CHAPTER 3

ARCHAEOLOGY AND APARTHEID

The Meaning of Apartheid.

Apartheid has come to mean many things. Leonard Thompson views it as the final working out of an idea inherent in Afrikaner history and consciousness, making of it something ancient and inbred. It is the "dramatic intensification of the racial element that had always been part of the Afrikaner world view" (1985: 44)¹. Dan O'Meara has been sharply critical of idealist accounts of apartheid. He ties his account of the development of Afrikaner nationalism in the years 1934-48 to the imperatives of capitalist development in the same period. As he describes it, apartheid was fundamentally a means of securing economic power in the hands of a white, predominantly Afrikaner, elite². Jacques Derrida ("Racism's Last Word") stresses the singularity of apartheid. It is "the unique appellation for the ultimate racism in the world" (1986: 330). At the same time it is a phenomenon in which Europe recognises itself: "What is South Africa?", asks Derrida. His answer is that it is a "concentration of world history":

we might be tempted to look at this region of the world as a giant tableau or painting, the screen for some geopolitical computer. Europe, in the enigmatic process of its globalization and of its paradoxical disappearance, seems to

¹. See *The Political Mythology of Apartheid* (Yale University Press: New Haven). Thompson stresses the continuity of racist thinking in Afrikaner history. In another section he writes: "...if anti-imperialism was the warp of early Afrikaner mythology, its woof was the racism that was then endemic in Western culture. By the middle of the twentieth century, however, the context had changed. British power was ebbing and the black inhabitants of South Africa... constituted the major challenge to white hegemony. The mythology was then modified to place less stress on its anti-British element and more on its racist element" (1985: 239).

². *Volkskapitalisme: Class, capital and ideology in the development of Afrikaner nationalism 1934-1948* (1983). O'Meara writes that Afrikaner nationalism "was fundamentally shaped by the imperatives and contradictions of, and struggles around, the accumulation of capital" (1983: 248). Moreover: "The NP government after 1948 secured the political conditions for rapid accumulation by all capital. More particularly, it also created the conditions for an even more rapid growth of Afrikaner capital" (1983: 249). An account of the development of the state in the post-'48 period becomes an account of the "transformation of Afrikaner nationalism in the process of, and struggles around, the accumulation of capital" (1983: 256).

project onto this screen, point by point, the silhouette of its internal war, the bottom line of its profits and losses, the double-bind logic of its national and multi-national interests. Their dialectical evaluation provides only a provisional stasis in a precarious equilibrium, one whose price today is apartheid (1986: 336-7)

Apartheid confronts us as a kind of universal moral failure: "the customary discourse on man, humanism and human rights, has encountered its effective and as yet unthought limit, the limit of the whole system in which it acquires meaning" (1986: 337)³. In this view apartheid is the sad culmination of a certain tragic strain in world history.

Desmond Tutu regularly refers to apartheid in the theological sense as an evil⁴. The writer and critic J.M. Coetzee has argued that apartheid needs to be considered a form of madness, a principle of irrationality. In an essay on one of the architects of apartheid thought, a man called Geoffrey Cronje ("The Mind of Apartheid: Geoffrey Cronje (1907-)", he writes:

As an episode in historical time apartheid is overdetermined. It did indeed flower out of self-interest and greed, but it also flowered out of desire and the hatred of desire. In its greed it demanded black bodies in all their physicality in order to burn up their energy as labour. In its anxiety about black bodies it made iron laws to banish them from sight. Its essence was therefore from the beginning confusion, a confusion which it displaced wildly around itself. (1992: 2)⁵

³. Derrida's essay is included in a collection called "*Race*", *Writing and Difference* edited by Henry Louis Gates (University of Chicago Press: Chicago). Derrida writes of apartheid as: "that which comes along at the end of history, or in the last analysis, to carry out the law of some process and reveal the thing's truth, here finishing off the essence of evil, the worst, the essence at its very worst - as if there was something like a racism par excellence, the most racism of racisms" (1986: 330). Of its particular connection with European history, he notes that "the name of *apartheid* has managed to become a sinister swelling on the body of the world only in that place where *homo politicus europaeus* first put his signature on its tattoo" (1986: 333).

⁴. It follows that the cure for evil is an act of exorcism - as witness Tutu's recent highly publicised role as Head of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (see Chapter 4).

⁵. In *Social Dynamics* 17(1): 1-35. I worked for John Coetzee as a research assistant on this paper, an experience which gave me a first-hand knowledge of the early literature of apartheid. It is interesting to note that Derrida similarly places the twin themes of desire and obsession at the centre of his analysis of apartheid. He writes that "no tongue has ever translated this name - as if all the languages of the world were defending themselves, shutting their mouths against a sinister incorporation of

Steve Biko describes apartheid as a totalizing form of oppression which touched all aspects of his life. In a celebrated essay, "We Blacks", he writes:

Born shortly before 1948, I have lived all my conscious life in the framework of institutionalised separate development. My friendships, my love, my education, my thinking and every other facet of my life have been carved and shaped within the context of separate development. (1978: 27)⁶

In this context "black consciousness" becomes a way of "outgrow[ing] some of the things the system taught me".

One of the more useful accounts of apartheid from my point of view is the recent work of Mahmood Mamdani. He situates apartheid squarely within the processes and traditions of colonial state development in Africa ("Apartheid followed in the wake of a trail blazed by British "indirect rule", French "association", and Belgian "customary rule"" 1997: 23⁷). The colonial state organized itself around the faultline of race, but also of ethnicity, and around a rural/ urban divide. Put simply, it linked racial exclusion to ethnic inclusion: "the majority that had been excluded on racial grounds would now appear as a series of ethnic minorities, each included in an ethnically-defined political process" (1997: 23). If the settler minority had its rights protected by racially-exclusive civil laws, and a race-bound civil society, then the majority would be administered by "customary laws" enforced by ethnically-defined Native Authorities. This is the essential distinction between "citizen" and "subject" to which the title of his major work refers: *Citizen and Subject; Contemporary Africa and the legacy of late colonialism* (1996).

In a further geographical distinction, identities defined through racial exclusion were urban, those defined through ethnic inclusion, rural. The problem for South Africa as a semi-industrialised, semi-proletarianized colonial state was the comparatively large

the thing by means of the word... refusing to let themselves be contaminated through the contagious hospitality of the word-for-word. Here, then, is the immediate response to the obsessiveness of this racism, to the compulsive terror which, above all, forbids contact" (1986: 331). Later he writes of apartheid's repressive legal apparatus: "in a breathless frenzy of obsessive juridical activity, two hundred laws and amendments were enacted in twenty years" (1986: 335).

⁶. See Steve Biko - *I Write What I Like* (1978), edited by Aelred Stubbs.

⁷. This is from an article called "Reconciliation Without Justice" published in the *Southern African Political and Economic Monthly* 10 (6): 22-25 (March 1997).

numbers of urban blacks. This accounts for the particular ferocity and extremity of the South African case as, under apartheid, large numbers of urban blacks were forcibly removed to enforce this dynamic of exclusion and inclusion. In *Citizen and Subject* Mamdani writes:

What gave apartheid its particularly cruel twist was its attempt artificially to deurbanize a growing urban African population. This required the introduction of administratively driven justice and fused power in African townships; the experience can be summarized in two words, *forced removals*, which must chill a black South African spine even today. (1996: 29)

Mamdani's account of apartheid makes two points which I want to emphasise. The first is that apartheid is not an aberration, but in some ways a logical outcome of the processes of colonial state development in Africa (however unjust such processes might have been). The second is that in making reparations for apartheid we need to understand the effects of colonialism - that is to say, he makes it possible and even necessary to speak of a post-apartheid society and a post-colonial society in South Africa in the same breath.

I began writing this chapter in the week in which the new constitution of South Africa was adopted - a week in which apartheid was finally pronounced dead (although its effects are still with us). It is an appropriate time to raise the question of what apartheid has meant. In the context of this study I shall be posing the question of what apartheid has meant for archaeologists in South Africa. It is an important question to ask, not least because I would argue that both the shape and nature of archaeology as it currently exists in South Africa, as well as its future prospects, have been conditioned, constrained and directed in crucial ways by the nature of its relationship with apartheid. Archaeology, no less than other aspects of South African life, bears the mark of its own history.

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The question of the relationship between archaeology and apartheid is made especially interesting by the fact that, through an interesting historical quirk, the period of the establishment and institutionalization of archaeology in South Africa, and the period of the founding of apartheid, coincide almost exactly. The decade of the 1920s, and particularly the 1930s, saw the establishment of Afrikaner

Nationalism as a political force in South Africa. Moodie (1975) notes that the 1930s saw the return from doctoral study in Europe of a group of young Afrikaner intellectuals inspired with the ideals of neo-Fichtean nationalism, whose published work was to lay the philosophical foundations of apartheid⁸. Chief among these was Nic Diedrichs, Piet Meyer, H.F. Verwoerd (later prime minister) and Cronje himself.

The foremost event in this period in the establishment of Afrikaner nationalism was the *Euufees*, or centenary celebration of the covenant taken at Blood River on 16 December 1838 (Moodie calls it the "Highpoint of the Civil Faith"). In a set of events which were themselves to be ritually re-enacted fifty years later under very different circumstances, nine wagons drawn by oxen departed from various points around the country to converge on Pretoria and Blood River. Moodie writes that "Passionate enthusiasm seized Afrikaans-speaking South Africa" (180). Men grew their beards, women donned Voortrekker dress, street after street in town after town was named after Voortrekker heroes, babies were baptized and couples married in the shadow of the wagons. Crucially, these events acted as a unifying force and were instrumental in overcoming the factionalism which had characterised Afrikaner politics. Moodie writes: "The memory of this "oxwagon unity" would constitute a potent political force during the next decade" (180). Although interrupted by the war, these developments culminated in the election of an *Herstigte* National Party (HNP) government in 1948, a date generally taken to mark the beginning of apartheid.

For South African archaeology the years from the mid-1920s to the mid-1940s can similarly be regarded as a formative period⁹. A.J.H. Goodwin came from Cambridge to take up a position as research assistant in ethnology at the University of Cape Town in 1923. In 1926 he published a series of popular articles on archaeological topics in the Cape Town's daily newspaper, the *Cape Times*, under the heading "Sermons in Stone". In 1929 Goodwin and Van Riet Lowe published *The Stone Age Cultures of South Africa*, a formative work in the development of a local terminology. Van Riet Lowe became the first Director of the Bureau of Archaeology (later the Archaeological Survey) on its founding in 1935. The Southern African Archaeological

⁸. This is in a work called *The Rise of Afrikanerdom; Power, Apartheid and the Afrikaner Civil Religion*.

⁹. This is not to say that archaeology had not been undertaken in South Africa before this period. In fact, credible archaeological work was being carried out from the latter half of the nineteenth-century. However, these were generally one-off explorations by travellers, and it was not until the period beginning in the 1920s that archaeology was institutionalised as a practice in South Africa.

Society held its first meeting in June 1945, and the first edition of its journal, the *South African Archaeological Bulletin (SAAB)*, appeared in December of that year. In 1947 the Prime Minister of South Africa, General J.C. Smuts, made the unique gesture of placing an Air Force plane at the disposal of the South African delegation to the first meeting of the Pan-African Congress on Prehistory held in Nairobi. For South African archaeology, as for Quaternary studies in Africa as a whole, this meeting was something of a coming-out party. In the spirit of the occasion the South African delegation were able to issue an invitation for the next meeting of the Pan-African Congress (four years later, in 1951) to be held in the Union of South Africa, again at the instigation of Smuts. As it happened, two events were to intervene: the election of the HNP government the following year, and the death of Smuts in 1950, and the invitation was retracted.

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Points of Departure.

Since then the development of archaeology in South Africa has taken place in the shadow of apartheid. My aim here is to address the key features of this relationship, particularly to the extent that I would argue that they have been widely misunderstood and misrepresented. This involves dealing with a basket of assumptions and generally held ideas about South African archaeology.

The first of these is the idea that archaeology in South Africa (and elsewhere) exists above the political contexts in which it operates - that it has remained free of the taint of apartheid. For a long time this appears to have been the unstated assumption behind much archaeological work in South Africa, and was the basis on which foreign archaeologists continued to maintain academic links despite pressures in the 1980s to boycott this country. This view forms part of a broader intellectual tradition which insists on the autonomy of academic work, and the essential independence of the universities. Involvement in politics is seen as dirtying, distracting, leading the academic down the slippery path of subjective interpretation. It is worth noting that the subject matter of archaeologists - a distant past, seemingly far removed from the vicissitudes of the political present - has tended to incline them to this view.

As one might expect the discourse of academic freedom - and its opposite, the language of accountability - formed a prominent part of exchanges around the banning of South African and Namibian participants from the 1986 World Archaeological Congress. The instance that I shall cite comes from a statement issued by Professor Tobias on his return from a meeting of the Permanent Council of the IUPPS, which is quoted with approval in the *SAAB* (41:4, 1986). The Permanent Council had voted in favour of the International Executive Committee's decision to reschedule the 11th congress of the IUPPS to September 1987, where it would be held in Mainz and Frankfurt (with the participation of the South Africans). Tobias writes:

The action of the IUPPS Executive Committee has written a memorable new chapter in the age-old history of the struggle for the free circulation of scientists, free access to knowledge by all and the universality of science. At a time when attempts are being made to overturn these principles or weaken their currency, the IUPPS resolutions constitute a striking reaffirmation of the need to keep international scientific intercourse and the access to knowledge free from political, racial or geographical limitations. However obnoxious the policies of certain governments or regimes may be, this should not influence the decision to admit freely to international scientific meetings, scientists from all countries. (4)

Tobias's statement constitutes a concise refutation of the notion that knowledge is socially constructed. The international discourse of science floats free of its grounding in any particular social context. At the same time he dismisses precisely those factors of politics, race and geography which have informed my own approach in this study.

A second, and opposed, position admits that there is a necessary connection between archaeology and its social and political contexts, but in the case of South African archaeology it regards this relation as being at root an oppositional one. Here it is assumed that the subject matter of archaeology in South Africa placed it in a kind of necessary ideological opposition to apartheid, which was constructed around the denial of black achievement. This has been a standard justification for archaeologists opposed to apartheid who have worked inside the country, and has been the ground on which they have defended the relevance of their work.

The instances that I shall cite are again taken from the commentary around the 1986 World Archaeological Congress, which served the useful function of making explicit

many tacitly-held assumptions about archaeology, apartheid and academic freedom. They are taken from Ucko's account, *Academic Freedom and Apartheid; The story of the World Archaeological Congress* (1987). What makes them interesting, besides the striking nature of their imagery, is the fact that they both come from individuals of the political left, and are therefore well-intended. In his foreword to the book, Neal Ascherson, writing in favour of the ban, talks of South African archaeologists as "themselves in no way personally tainted by support for apartheid and, on the contrary, in many cases displaying impressive intellectual battle honours in the struggle" (viii). In the same work, Thurston Shaw writes: "It is sad that this means excluding courageous South Africans who, by their work, have indeed helped to undermine the theoretical basis of apartheid. Such scholars are, as it were, underground resistance fighters; but in the last war underground resistance fighters were sometimes killed by the British and American bombs supporting them" (84). Ascherson makes the same reference - in connection with the ban, he writes: "This hurts, but it seems to me to be a hurt that goes with the job - like the hurt of ostracism for those who worked for a German occupation regime by day to conceal their work for the Resistance by night. It should not be understood as a real rejection" (240).

What interests me is the repetition of the same figure, the somewhat flattering portrait of South African archaeologists as underground fighters of the Resistance, waging a guerilla war against oppression. In fact, I shall argue that the relationship between archaeology and apartheid, and between individual archaeologists and the apartheid state, was a good deal more complex and ambiguous than this characterisation suggests. The lines between complicity and opposition, and between struggle, sacrifice and disciplinary gain, cannot be drawn with anything like the simple assuredness of Ascherson and Shaw.

A third assumption, which takes off from this position, is that apartheid was necessarily to the detriment of the development of archaeology in South Africa. It stifled it and drove it underground. It denied its practitioners the recognition they deserved, forcing on them the skills of duplicity and cunning. The corollary of this assumption is that South African archaeologists would experience the demise of apartheid as a period of renaissance, a moment when they could practice openly that which previously they had been forced to dissemble. In fact, in many respects just the opposite has been the case. One of the surprising points to emerge from this

review is that archaeology prospered under apartheid, at least since the late-1960s, and it faces a post-apartheid future with uncertainty.

A final point concerns the relationship between metropolitan and satellite archaeologies, specifically with regard to the issue of theory. A general assumption has it that the way for archaeologists working in South Africa to overcome the effects of apartheid is for them to more efficiently align themselves with developments in Anglo-American archaeology. By faithfully mimicking the metropolitan tradition they may hope to neutralise the effects of their particular situation, as a discipline practiced under apartheid. In fact, I would argue that for South African archaeologists to overcome the effects of their social and historical context means concentrating, in the first place, on the particularity of this position. Part of the failure of South African archaeologists, perhaps the major part, has been the failure of the guiding ideas with which they worked - ideas which have been derived in the main from the metropolitan traditions. The shortcomings, lacunae and conceptual limitations of these ideas are revealed in the interplay between history, politics and the production of knowledge in South Africa. In this respect South Africa, with its stark racial landscapes, its polarised histories, has served as a stage which reveals the limitations of the guiding ideas and paradigms in the discipline at large - much as for Derrida it reveals some dark essence of Western history.

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Archaeology in South Africa - Review.

There are a number of reviews and short accounts of the development of archaeology in South Africa, although, with the exception of Martin Hall's reviews of Iron Age archaeology (1984, 1990), none of them take as their central theme the relationship between archaeology and apartheid. Rather, they tend to be accounts of personalities, and of developments internal to the discipline - as Francoise Kense has phrased it, of "excavations and advances in methodology and the techniques of archaeological investigation" (1990: 135). Where the social context of research does figure in these accounts, as it occasionally does, it is as backdrop, rather than from any sense of its determining effects.

A Local Terminology.

Goodwin's (1935) paper, "A commentary on the history and present position of South African prehistory with full bibliography", published in *Bantu Studies* (9,4: 291-417) is the earliest scholarly review of archaeological activity in South Africa, and still the most detailed for any given period. Like many a good colonial history it begins with Dutch settlement in 1652, but Goodwin notes that although the settlers were "in constant touch with primitive folk using stone implements, [they] have left us very little description" (293). Rather, it is to the explorers, "those brave inquisitive fathers of modern journalism, that we must turn for our earliest information". He adds, somewhat dramatically, "They met solitary savages, by chance, and unprepared" (203).

The first attempt to give a comprehensive account of South African prehistory was made by Dunn in 1880, who attempted to synthesize material from a number of sites. Goodwin comments: he "generally fails to describe the exact type of his flaked implements, or to give provenience sufficiently exact to allow later workers to check his material... Had he been more careful in these minutiae, his work would have provided a firm basis for the early systematisation of this country's prehistory. As it is, it is the paper of a typical collector rather than that of a scientist" (300). The first attempt to classify the South African material which Goodwin finds valuable was published by J.C. Rickard in the Cambridge Antiquarian Society's publication for 1881. Drawing on the European terminology, he divides the sequence into a Paleolithic, a Neolithic, and an Historic period, the latter consisting of a group called "Bushmen shelters" and another called "Late Kitchen Midden".

In 1905 the British Association for the Advancement of Science visited South Africa. Goodwin suggests that: "As a direct result, prehistory received a very considerable stimulus in this country, both from local and visiting savants" (313). This was also the year of publication of Stow's book on the "Native Races of South Africa" covering his researches from 1843-1880, under the editorship of George McCall Theal. In his presidential address to section H of the British Association, A.C. Haddon gave "some excellent advice on method" (Goodwin 1935: 315), in the course of which he urges caution on the adoption of a European terminology: "It would probably be in the interest of South African archaeology if the terms "Eolithic", "Paleolithic", and "Neolithic" were dropped, at all events for the present, or restricted solely to the type of technique; it might prove advantageous if provisional terms were employed, which

could later be either ratified or abandoned, as the consensus of local archaeological opinion should decide" (quoted in Goodwin). Goodwin comments: this "is certainly the most helpful publication which has appeared on South African prehistory" (316).

Dr Louis Peringuey was an entomologist who came from France to investigate diseases in South African vineyards. He became the director of the South African Museum, and developed an interest in archaeology, writing a number of papers and discovering the Bosman's Crossing site at Stellenbosch which became the name site for the Stellenbosch culture (Malan 1970). In 1911 he published a classificatory scheme for the South African Stone Age ("The Stone Ages of South Africa", *Annals of the South African Museum* vol.8), which he divides into three main types: type I. which includes a Stellenbosch type and an Orange River type; type II. which includes an "Inland" (or Aurignacian), and a "Littoral" (or Solutro-Magdalenian) group; and a type III. which has Neolithic elements. Goodwin comments: "Peringuey's volume does no more than to lay the foundation for future research; every chapter ends with a tacit question" (1935: 324). The next major attempt to order the South African Stone Age sequence was carried out by Goodwin himself (1925), and the succeeding parts of his paper are devoted to a description of the events and debates surrounding the adoption of his scheme ("The New Terminology"); a brief description of the accepted sequence for the Stone Age at the time of writing ("The Present Position of South African Prehistory"); an attempt to link the lithic sequence to faunal, floral and climatic changes ("Correlations"); a brief meditation on the future of the discipline; and a complete bibliography of prehistoric research in South Africa. However, for an account of the decade from 1923 I turn to an updated paper (Goodwin 1958) devoted to a description of these events¹⁰.

Goodwin intended his 1958 paper ("Formative Years of our Prehistoric Terminology") to be a definitive account of an important period in the development of South African archaeology. Malan remarks that the paper is "to some extent autobiographical, written when he knew very well that he had only a very short time left in which to record the facts which he alone knew" (1970: 88). It tells the story of the development of the South African Stone Age terminology in the 1920s, which in many respects is the story of Goodwin's own development as an archaeologist. Goodwin came to South Africa from Cambridge in 1923 as research assistant in

¹⁰. One of the points to emerge from Goodwin's careful review is the surprising volume of work conducted in this early period. Goodwin's (1926) terminology was built on a solid foundation of half a century of Stone Age research in South Africa.

ethnology at the University of Cape Town under Professor Radcliffe Brown. His task was to build up an ethnographical survey and bibliography, intended to provide the foundation of an Africa Institute at Cape Town. At the same time he began work on the stone implement collections of the South African Museum. A combination of field-work and museum investigation convinced Goodwin of "the absolute necessity for evolving an entirely new cultural terminology for southern Africa" (1958: 25). The French system (which following Perinquey was the accepted system in South African Stone Age studies) was inappropriate, both with respect to implement types and faunal and climatic history - "also the immense uncharted body of prehistoric Africa lay between Cape Town and France, so that no "bonding" between our material and the glaciated regions was possible" (25).

It was also in this period that Goodwin began a correspondence with Van Riet Lowe, a civil engineer who in the course of road construction in the Free State had located a number of sites. Goodwin remarks that Van Riet Lowe's formal training in archaeology consisted of a single lecture on the subject given by A.R.E. Walker at the University of Cape Town as the annual lecture on archaeology. Goodwin's correspondence with van Riet Lowe "disciplined me to clarify and set down my own views and methods" (27). He was Goodwin's first pupil, and he was also a useful acolyte: "By the middle of 1925 van Riet Lowe had been converted to and drilled in my terminology". One is reminded of the energy which Goodwin and Van Riet Lowe brought to South African prehistoric studies: working together, in the space of a few years, they "more than trebled the rich collection of the South African Museum amassed over some thirty or more years".

Goodwin first presented his new terminology at the July 1925 meeting of the South African Association for the Advancement of Science in Oudtshoorn, but voluntarily withdrew his paper, both because of what he terms "opposition in certain quarters", and because it was felt that the meeting was not sufficiently representative of practising archaeologists (Van Riet Lowe, among others, had been prevented from attending). It was agreed that a more comprehensive conference be called in July 1926 in Pretoria "for the purpose of accepting, rejecting or modifying the proposed terminology" (28). In the mean time Goodwin faced the problem of publicising his proposed terminology, and he turned to the press. He had written frequent articles and leaders on scientific and literary topics for the *Cape Times* ("to eke out meagre research grants" 1958: 28), and he now secured a contract to write a series of popular articles on archaeological topics for the weekend edition. The line-blocks

which resulted would be used to print a Museum Handbook which was to be a descriptive guide to the archaeological collections of the South African Museum ("then by far the finest in Africa south of the Sahara"). The twelve articles which resulted appeared between 27 March and 3 July 1926 under the heading "Sermons in Stones" (later changed to "Stories in Stones"), the first nine of which were condensed to form the Handbook.

At the Pretoria conference of 1926 Goodwin first met Van Riet Lowe, whom he had previously known only via their correspondence. He also saw his terminology accepted by the Association, with minor changes. What Goodwin proposed was a two stage division of the South African Stone Age into an Earlier Stone Age and a Later Stone Age, the former comprising a Stellenbosch type, a Fouesmith type, and an uncertain Victoria West type. The Later Stone Age comprised an Eastern type (which Goodwin regarded as provisional), a Smithfield type, and a Pygmy or Microlithic type which was regarded as having persisted into the period of colonial contact. At the conference the Pygmy or Microlithic type was renamed the Wilton; the Eastern type was dropped altogether, one element of it becoming the Stillbay (Goodwin had wanted to call it the Maitland); and the Victoria West culture was shelved pending further investigation of the name site.

The importance of the new terminology lies in several directions. On the one hand Goodwin was keenly aware of a Eurocentric tradition of learning in prehistory, and (as Haddon had pointed out) of the importance of adapting to local conditions. In the first of his "Sermons in Stones" (27 March 1926), in the context of a discussion of early researchers in South African prehistory, he writes: "Now all of these men were trained either from books on European archaeology or by men who had themselves been trained in Europe. Thus every find made in South Africa was viewed through European spectacles" (quoted in Goodwin 1958: 29). Underlying this was an awareness of the assumptions implicit in importing a European terminology. In the third article in the series (24 April 1926) he writes of the earliest period in the cultural sequence: "This period is being termed the Earlier Stone Age, to dissociate it from the glacial periods and types of men found in Europe... Also it does away with the presumption that this type of man came in from Europe" (ibid).

More importantly, the recognition of a two stage sequence directly refuted a cultural evolutionist position with a long history in prehistoric studies which regarded the Bushmen as the original inhabitants of South Africa, responsible for the totality of the

Stone Age record. In this view the Bushmen were a relic population, miraculously preserved in a cultural state which correlated with the very earliest levels of European cultural development. By advocating an Earlier Stone Age, distinct from a Later Stone Age which was identified with the Bushmen, Goodwin was showing that Southern Africa was the site of an indigenous process of cultural development. In "Sermons in Stones" (III), he writes:

Up till quite lately several presumptions have been made as to who were the original South Africans. It was first presumed long years ago that the Bushmen, as we loosely call them, were the first inhabitants of our country... On this has been pyramided a further presumption that all the stone implements found in South Africa were "Bushman"... However, geological evidence in various parts of the country points to the presence of two distinct periods in the stone implements of this country. First came the large almond-shaped implements, often nine inches long in their finished state, neatly and symmetrically made from a block of stone... Later on came the little, neatly made implements associated with bone implements, pottery, round pierced stones and the like, belonging obviously to a hunting people... (quoted in Goodwin 1958: 29)

The effect of Goodwin's terminology was to unshackle South African Stone Age studies from an identification with the Bushmen (and by implication, to separate out archaeology from ethnology). More generally, it opened the door to human evolutionary studies in South Africa. Goodwin's account makes it clear that this was not achieved without resistance. He writes: "A strong fight is being put up against this division into an Earlier and a Later grouping. In many instances implements of the two ages are found on the same spot, and this, on the face of it, would appear sufficient reason against a sequence of time" (ibid). To prove his sequence he fell back on two types of evidence: the limited evidence of stratified sequences available from the small number of excavations from cave sites; and the evidence of surface abrasion and oxidization of stone artefacts from open sites studied by Van Riet Lowe (the Earlier types showed evidence of heavier weathering).

Goodwin reports that during the remainder of 1926 "the analysis of the Middle Stone Age began" (1958: 31). This was largely at the instigation of Neville Jones, whose "pioneer book", the *Stone Ages of Southern Rhodesia*, was published in November of that year. The term was in use by 1927, and the first description was read on 3 July 1928 at Kimberley.

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The Archaeological Survey.

Goodwin had proposed to Sir Carruthers Beattie, the Principal of the University of Cape Town, that a Department of Archaeology be established. It was in the context of this proposal that Burkitt was invited to South Africa to give his view. The Burkitts arrived in June 1927, and embarked on the tour planned by Goodwin "to visit the more accessible sites and to introduce local workers" (1958: 32). By any standards it was an extraordinarily comprehensive affair. Goodwin accompanied the Burkitts for 5000 miles of their tour within the Union. They were joined by Neville Jones for a further 1500 miles of their tour in Southern Rhodesia, in the course of which they attended the Salisbury session of the South African Association for the Advancement of Science. Back in the Union, Goodwin handed the Burkitts over to Van Riet Lowe for a 500 mile tour of the Free State. The immediate result of this tour was Burkitt's book, *South Africa's Past in Stone and Paint* (1928). A further result was Goodwin and van Riet Lowe's collaboration on *The Stone Age Cultures of South Africa* (1929), which is the most important work to have emerged from this period.

Goodwin writes: "by 1931 Van Riet Lowe had made up his mind to become a prehistorian. His interest had been deeply roused by collaboration with Burkitt, the Abbe Breuil and Harper Kelly in the field. Various strings were pulled, by the Abbe, Mrs Hoernle and myself. Each of us variously approached General Smuts, who had shown his keen interest through the past climates of Africa... the stage was set for something to happen, and after a few years the Bureau of Archaeology was created, later to become the Archaeological survey" (1958: 32-3)¹¹. For an account of the establishment of the Survey I turn to B.D. Malan, Goodwin's student and professional officer to the Survey; but before leaving Goodwin's paper it is worth underlining his achievement, which was remarkable. The collections which Goodwin worked with at the South African Museum were poorly curated, and were mainly the result of

¹¹. Deacon (1990) remarks that Goodwin may have been left discouraged by this turn of events since "he had hoped that he himself would be appointed as Director of an Institute of Prehistory attached to the South African Museum" (45). She recalls Leach's (1984) remark that the background of anthropologists in Britain in the first few decades of the century had much to do with whether they "got on" in university politics. "In Van Riet Lowe's case, he was fortunate in the status he achieved from having served in the First World War because Smuts had done the same" (46).

selectively collected surface sites. It was common for stone artefacts to be completely unprovenienced, or to carry such location markers as "Karoo", "Cape Province", or "Free State". At one point in his account Goodwin writes with feeling: "...in South Africa the accumulation of hundreds of collected specimens from surface areas of uncertain extent, without an iota of supporting evidence of either association or stratigraphy, had for fifty years been regarded as of paramount importance. A collection was valuable in relation to its size... all else was quite extraneous" (1958: 27). Goodwin began with a typological arrangement of the stone artefacts from the Museum collections; he then ordered them according to stratigraphic relationships and inferred age, the whole time checking his inferences against sites in the field. Writing thirty years later Goodwin was able to say: "The basic pattern, then laid down, has remained with little change, has spread far into Africa, and is even used in India as a basis of terminology" 1958: 25).

First presented to a meeting of the South African Archaeological Society in November 1967, B.D. Malan's paper, entitled "Remarks and reminiscences on the history of archaeology in South Africa" (SAAB 25: 88-92, 1970), is at the same time a personal account of a life spent in archaeology. Malan begins by recalling the early history of archaeological research in South Africa, drawing on Goodwin's two papers on the subject. When he comes to discuss the Archaeological Survey his theme becomes the importance of the political patronage of General Jan Smuts in the early establishment and institutionalization of archaeology in South Africa. In 1931 Van Riet Lowe attended the meeting of the British Association in England presided over by Smuts. He and Smuts returned on the same ship, and at the latter's suggestion they met daily for discussions on prehistory, and particularly on problems of climate and environment in which Smuts, as a botanist, was keenly interested. They also discussed the idea of an Archaeological Survey which had first been mooted by Breuil. Malan writes: "With General Smuts's powerful patronage, the Bureau of Archaeology was established in 1935 with Van Riet Lowe, transferred from the Public Works Department, as its first Director" (91)¹².

Van Riet Lowe defined the aim of the Bureau as having a threefold objective: "It was to be a research institute, an information centre for all who were engaged in

¹². Rushdi Nackerdien has noted the important role played by Smuts in lending his political weight to the establishment of archaeology in South Africa (in his MA dissertation titled *Archaeology and Education in South Africa: Towards a People's Archaeology*, 1994).

archaeological studies, and it was to promote and encourage general public interest in South African prehistory" (91). Malan joined as assistant professional officer in 1936, and later took over as Director. He reports that as a centre for information it functioned mainly by correspondence. He and Van Riet Lowe wrote to a large circle of correspondents, mostly amateurs reporting their discoveries: "We gathered what knowledge we could and passed it out as best we could without any reservation of "priority rights"". Van Riet Lowe excelled at promoting public interest, "and hardly a week passed without some reference to archaeology in the press". Malan notes that "While the Survey imparted what it could about the work of its staff and others, it functioned as a *survey* only in a limited way". The most comprehensive survey that it undertook was recording the distribution of rock paintings and engravings. The so-called Vaal River Survey was "hardly a survey and was much more a piece of research extending over a fairly large area", and the same was true of the Caledon River Survey.

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The Archaeological Society and the *Bulletin*.

Archaeological work in South Africa was interrupted by the war, however a number of important developments took place in the mid 1940s, in the final stages of the war and its immediate aftermath. Malan picks up the narrative in a second paper called "The South African Archaeological Society: ten years of archaeology in South Africa" (SAAB 11: 31-40, 1956), in which he tells the story of the founding of that body. The idea of forming an archaeological society occurred independently to a small group in the Cape, including D.F. Bleek and Goodwin himself. Their idea bore fruit at a meeting at Goodwin's house on 9 August 1944 in the form of the Cape Archaeological Society. Malan writes: "The initial aims [of the society] were modest, both territorially and in the scope of the activities contemplated... It was hoped that a minimum initial membership of thirty would enable it to function, and perhaps, if things went well, it might be possible to consider extending its activities beyond the confines of the Cape Province in five year's time" (31). As it happened, these aims were soon shown to be too modest: "The new society not only won good support in the Cape, but many people beyond the borders of that province welcomed it and expressed the desire to participate in its activities". At a special meeting in Cape Town early in 1945 Smuts and Van Riet Lowe urged that the society be reconstituted

to cover the whole of Southern Africa. As a result on 5 June 1945 the South African Archaeological Society came into being, with the intention of covering archaeological activity in "southern Africa, including Southern Rhodesia and the neighbouring territories which have a lively interest in the subject" (quoted in Malan 1956: 32). Nine months after its inaugural meeting the Society counted 247 members and sixty junior associates, organized in six regional centres.

With the small number of professional archaeologists in South Africa the Society was very largely amateur, and one of its principal objectives became the publicising of archaeological knowledge for a non-specialist audience. This was done in two ways, via the so-called "Handbook Series", and via the *Archaeological Bulletin*. The intention behind the Handbook Series was ambitious: it was "meant to build up into an encyclopaedia of Archaeology in South Africa, presented in such a way that any publication, well-known site, painting, petroglyph or physical relic, that had been adequately dealt with, can be referred to quickly and easily by any enthusiast with access to a good public library" (editorial to the *Bulletin* 1: 1, 1945). The first of these handbooks, *Method in Prehistory*, had already been written by Goodwin; and the second, also by Goodwin, was published in 1946 as *The Loom of Prehistory*. Janette Deacon (1990) notes that until 1986 *Method in Prehistory* was the only general work on method with a specifically South African focus.

Prior to the formation of the Archaeological Society most of the short papers and research reports on archaeological topics had appeared in the South African Association for the Advancement of Science's publication, the *South African Journal of Science*. The first number of the South African Archaeological Bulletin appeared in December 1945 under the imposing motto: "From Central Africa to the Cape. From the earliest Man to the dawn of History". The editorial to the first edition (written by Goodwin who was editor) reiterates the general policy of the Society: "For the first five years we intend to be primarily instructive, and to confine ourselves to publishing matter in language that can be understood by any educated person". Malan recalls that the *Bulletin* had uncertain beginnings: "The first issue expressed the hope, but not the promise, that three numbers could be published each year" (1956: 32). However, such was its reception that within a year it became a regular quarterly journal.

Looking back, one is struck by the kind of eager, dilettante atmosphere in which archaeology was practised in this period. One finds ordinary members debating with

passion and seriousness topics which today would detain no more than a handful of specialists. In the editorial to numbers 99 and 100 of the *Bulletin*, Ray Inskip reflects on the social milieu of the founding of the Archaeological Society. He writes:

1945 was a year of destiny: a great and terrible war came to an end with the use of the most terrible weapon mankind has ever made: the atomic bomb. The world divided itself into two, separated by the Iron Curtain, and set the stage for developments which have taken us far beyond that stormy sea. Yet against this sombre background of world events there was also the stirrings of an optimism deeper, more sincere and more realistic than the hysterical outburst after the previous world war, and one of the expressions of this optimism was the foundation of innumerable literary, artistic, welfare and cultural bodies especially designed to serve the needs of the Common Man, a person much popularized by Franklin D. Roosevelt (who died early in 1945). (SAAB 25: 83, 1970)

In the same editorial he refers to the "need to involve the man in the street in a study of history". He notes of the *Bulletin* that "the new publication had the task of holding together the Society, and John Goodwin... never forgot that this was its prime object".

Writing in 1995 Roger Summers looks back over half a century of involvement in the discipline to recall the development of archaeology in the post-war years ("A President Looks Back" SAAB 50: 175-6). He begins: "Just about the time that the *Bulletin* was born, this ancient past President was contemplating changing his job". Summers had recently inherited money, and having developed an interest in archaeology envisaged a career for himself - possibly as museum curator in a country town in his native England. He recalls an amusing interview with Sir Leonard Wooley:

At the end of the interview, during which [I] was encouraged to take up this then unusual occupation, Sir Leonard, who had a rich wife, said tactfully to [me]: "Tell me Summers, have you any private means?" Being reassured on this score, Sir Leonard added "Things are better nowadays, but it's just as well not to be entirely dependent on your salary. Museums can be very mean at times". (175)

Instead of some English country town, Summers found himself in Bulawayo, in the then Southern Rhodesia. He recalls that he was the only trained archaeologist in the whole of Southern Rhodesia, and that his nearest professional colleague (Desmond

Clark) was 300 miles away at Livingstone. Interestingly, he writes: "In the Union... over three times the size of Southern Rhodesia and incomparably richer, things were even worse. John Goodwin, the only university-trained archaeologist in the whole country, was a senior lecturer at the University of Cape Town and had to teach ethnology as well as archaeology... Nearly all fieldwork was paid for by the archaeologists themselves. Goodwin once told his Rhodesian friend Neville Jones that excavation had cost him 800 Pounds of his own money" (175). The situation in museums was little better: "Even fifty years ago the largest local museums were very small and had professional staff numbering less than 20 for the whole country". One "go-ahead museum" (the Albany Museum in Grahamstown) had a single professional officer, John Hewitt, "who had so many skills that one hardly knows what his original profession was". The same thing happened in other museums, with the result that "early archaeological work was done by men and women whose primary training was in botany, entomology, geology, history, medicine or zoology, but whose feeling for scientific method was invaluable in preventing too many archaeological mistakes" (175).

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The First Pan-African Congress on Prehistory.

The other important event of this period was the first Pan-African Congress on Prehistory held in Nairobi in 1947. In his report on the eighth Pan-African Congress in 1977 (also held in Nairobi), Philip Tobias records some of the details of the earlier Congress (*SAAB* 33: 5-11, 1978). For some time Louis and Mary Leakey had been working on the prehistory of Kenya, and had the thought of "inviting colleagues from all over the world to visit some of the most important sites of East Africa" (5). They managed to elicit the support of senior figures in British archaeological circles, and to obtain funding from the Kenyan government and from several European countries. This was the occasion on which Smuts, as Prime Minister, made available to the South African delegation an Air Force plane to fly them to Nairobi, and issued an invitation for the second Pan-African Congress to be held in South Africa. Tobias notes that not only South African prehistorians, but delegates from Northern and Southern Rhodesia, Angola and Mozambique were taken in the same aircraft; and that the resulting passenger list included a number of distinguished scientists.

An important sidelight of the first Congress is that Le Gros Clark, Professor of Anatomy at Oxford, decided to visit South Africa before the Nairobi meeting especially to study the original fossils of *Australopithecus* from Taung, Sterkfontein and Kromdraai. From an initially sceptical attitude towards the claims that Raymond Dart and Robert Broom had made, he became convinced after studying the originals that they were correct. At the opening plenary session of the Pan-African Congress he rose to declare that the morphological evidence had converted him to the view that these australopithecines were true hominids, and occupied an ancestral position on the human family tree. Tobias writes: "The conversion of Le Gros Clark and the series of meticulous anatomical studies that flowed from his pen were turning points in the historical appraisal of the African early hominids" (6).

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The Loss of Official Patronage.

As an historical moment the first Pan-African Congress represents something of an apogee in the early development of archaeology in South Africa. The discipline enjoyed powerful official support in the form of Smuts, it had achieved recognition in the metropole, and it had an organized and interested popular base. In this context, the change of government in 1948 and the withdrawal of government support for the second Pan-African Congress which was its direct consequence, was a bitter disappointment. Goodwin's editorials from the period make it clear that this was keenly felt as a loss of official patronage. In the editorial to the edition of the *Bulletin* of March 1950, Goodwin writes:

At the First Pan-African Congress on Prehistory, held in Nairobi in 1947, an invitation from the Prime Minister of the Union to hold the next Congress in South Africa in 1951 was accepted with acclamation. It was generally felt that this was a most appropriate gesture, as the study of Prehistory had started (as far as our Continent is concerned) in the area now covered by the Union.
(SAAB 5: 1)

Then, as though summoning the full rhetorical force of science in the face of politics, he sets out the history of archaeological endeavour in the country, beginning with Van Riebeeck's Journals (1649-1662), and taking in Bowker's celebrated excavation of *in situ* stone implements ("while the now famous Boucher de Perthes was still

fighting an uphill battle for the recognition of his finds"). He lists some of the hundred-plus scientists who had published on South African prehistory to date; the scholars of high standing who had visited and worked in the country; and recalls the disciplines most illustrious moment: "In 1947 a large contingent of research workers of high international standing could be flown by special plane to Nairobi to take their rightful place among Africa's scientists. As a fitting climax, the Second Pan-African Congress was to have been held in South Africa in 1951" (2). But, he continues:

Now the Organizing Committee... has been officially advised that the holding of the Congress is inconvenient or inopportune, and the suggestion is put forward that South Africa cannot afford the four or (at most) five thousand pounds that will bring delegates from all parts of Africa and from interested overseas countries to South Africa.

Quite apart from the normal expenditure of delegates on such a Congress, quite apart from the publicity and good relations that will ensue, quite apart from the bad effects overseas of cancelling the expected Congress at this late hour, this constitutes a most decided setback to a subject in which South Africa could lead the world. We have the materials, we have the will, we have the men; we only lack the essential support of our own Government in this particular instance (2)

In an editorial of September 1950, Goodwin notes simply that "The possibility of holding the Congress becomes more and more remote, and our Pan-African failure becomes more and more humiliating with the passing days" (SAAB 5: 85).

This sense of official abandonment was sharpened by the death of Smuts. The Bulletin of December 1950 carries a black-edged obituary notice in place of an editorial, which honours Smuts's contribution to archaeology in South Africa. It continues: "With the passing of the General we have reached the end of a period; a South African period as formative and as clear-cut in its implications as the Victorian and the Elizabethan periods of Britain" (SAAB 5: 125).

A significant point turned up by the controversy surrounding the second Pan-African Congress is the extent to which the general political milieu of the discipline was at odds with the politics of Afrikaner nationalism. The small circle of initiates gathered in the Archaeological Society belonged to a different world: more outward-looking, more metropolitan, more Anglophile - part, in fact, of the transnational network of British Empire. The opposition between this world and the parochial politics of Afrikaner

nationalism, is best represented by the figure of Smuts himself, who of all the South African politicians to emerge in this period was best able to negotiate the internationalism of Empire. In the editorial to the June 1950 edition of the *Bulletin*, Goodwin allows himself an anti-nationalist jibe: "There is no further news of the Second Pan-African Congress on Prehistory, due to be held in 1951. Dr L.S.B. Leakey's brilliant inspiration seems to have been well ahead of its times. Perhaps (at the pace of the ox) we shall have reached an adequate cultural level in 2051 AD, to follow Kenya's brave lead". He continues, more ominously: "Perhaps the future pattern of scientific congresses will include delegates nominated by the powers that be, discussing questions posed by those same powers" (SAAB 5: 42).

The second meeting of the Pan-African Congress on Prehistory was rescheduled to Algiers at short notice, and has never again had the opportunity of meeting south of the Limpopo. Neither Malan nor Van Riet Lowe, Assistant Secretary and Vice President respectively, were able to attend at Algiers, and no other South African delegates participated.

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The Arrival of Inskip.

Van Riet Lowe died in 1956, and Goodwin in 1959, and was replaced at the University of Cape Town by Ray Inskip. Significantly, they had been at their posts for twenty-one and thirty-six years respectively. Goodwin's post was still the only university-based archaeological position. He had supervised only one doctoral student (R.J. Mason), and in all that time had been instrumental in arranging professional archaeological employment for no more than three of his students: B.D. Malan in the 1930's, Mason in the 1940s, and P.B. Beaumont in the 1950s (Deacon 1990). The situation in the museums was no better than it had been twenty years before. After a hopeful beginning the development of archaeology in South Africa had stalled, and it had done so largely as a result of the withdrawal of government patronage under the National Party government.

Inskip makes the theme of his address to the Annual Meeting of the South African Museums Association in April 1961, shortly after his arrival in the country, the state of neglect in which archaeology found itself ("The Present State of Archaeology in

South Africa" *SAMAB* 7: 225-229, 1961). He begins with a memorable description of archaeology's origins: "A hundred years ago archaeology was regarded less as a serious field of study than as a sort of bloodless blood sport. Schoolmasters, landed gentry, and country parsons would rise early on a Sunday morning and rush off with a handful of retainers to gash open half-a-dozen ancient burial mounds in search of pots, spears and trinkets which inspired their romantic imaginations" (225). So it was that "out of romantic curiosity - with the aid of a little serious scientific enquiry - archaeology as a science was conceived". He goes on to review the early development of archaeology in South Africa, noting that this country "may fairly claim the distinction of having led the field in the early stages of archaeological research in Africa south of the Sahara" (225). His review takes in Schumacher, Sparrman, Barrow and Bowker; highlights the importance of Goodwin and Van Riet Lowe's 1929 publication ("still a basic work of reference for the student of South African Archaeology"); and notes that: "Official interest came to the fore in 1935 with the establishment of a Government Bureau of Archaeology, and the South African Commission for the Preservation of Natural and Historical Monuments, Relics and Antiquities. South Africa had made a notable start in a rich new field of study" (226).

"But", continues Inskeep, "these worthy achievements belong to a previous generation, and we have seriously to ask ourselves whether at the present moment the achievements of the past have not been allowed to fall into neglect. Certainly when we look closely at official services, such as National Museums, and Commissions for the Preservation of Natural and Historical Monuments... it is quite clear that a number of smaller territories to the north are pursuing a far more active and enlightened course than is the case in South Africa today" (226-7). The Government Archaeological Survey (which was the directly-funded aspect of archaeological work in the Union) was short-staffed, and their accommodation "hopelessly inadequate". The Survey had no rooms of its own and occupied rooms in Milner Park provided by the University of the Witwatersrand. According to Inskeep: "Unless a Government grant is forthcoming, in the very near future, to put a new building on the ground generously donated by Witwatersrand University for a new Survey headquarters, the government archaeologists will become virtually waifs and strays" (228). Only one of the National Museums had a trained professional archaeologist on its staff, and the situation in the universities was little better. Inskeep's was the only university position in archaeology, and he had "the burden of running a museum, teaching, and pursuing research... with very little money at his disposal" (228). He writes: "In simple terms, all this means that in such a large

country as South Africa... there are five professional archaeologists to deal with the immense task of unravelling South Africa's past, a provision that is hopelessly inadequate" (229).

Inskeep saw quite clearly that the future of archaeology in South Africa could only be secured through an increased financial commitment from government sources, and his real purpose in this paper (as with so much of his work over the next decade) is to lobby for such support. The grounds on which he recommends archaeology are interesting and instructive: In the first place the study of the archaeological past is a matter of moral obligation ("there is much to be learned of the pre-history of our country; but all the time we delay the documents, contained in the soil, are being destroyed by natural processes of decay; and, more drastically, by the hand of man. We have a moral obligation to ourselves, and to posterity, to do all that can reasonably be done *now* to investigate the past" 1961: 227). In the second place a well-supported archaeological programme is a symbol of modernity and development. Inskeep writes of the need to train "successive generations of archaeologists in order that South Africa shall be able to stand firmly and proudly among the nations of the world in a field of research which is rapidly becoming a measure of cultural status, alongside such things as museums, libraries, art galleries, and general educational facilities" (227)¹³.

Inskeep's paper is typically perceptive and clear-sighted. He is quite clear about the goals of archaeology, for example: "Archaeology is a method by which prehistory can be written, and prehistory is simply an extension of history into a more remote period before historical documents existed" (227). Elsewhere, he comments on the richness of the archaeological record: "The Union is one of the richest fields for archaeological research in the whole world. It may not have held the key to the rise of European civilization, but it probably held a far more precious one, namely, the key to the whole of man's development beyond the stage of an ape-like creature" (227).

Inskeep's arrival was an important event for South African archaeology. He is remembered for having re-established the discipline. It is partly as a result of his lobbying abilities that archaeology experienced a period of rapid growth, after the

¹³. He repeats this point in an editorial published the following year (SAAB 27, 1962). He writes that active government support for archaeology "is widely held to be a measure, along with museums, art galleries, and general educational facilities, of a country's cultural status" (86).

relative stasis of the preceding decades. To a significant extent the nature of the discipline as it currently exists in South Africa is due to the influence of Inskeep, particularly with regard to its presence in the museums, and its professionalization. In 1993 the *Bulletin* devoted a special edition to papers honouring Inskeep's contribution to archaeology in this country - as Humphreys puts it in his paper, he was to cast a "long shadow" (1993: 82). However, the immediate reaction of the government was the opposite of what was intended. In the editorial to the *Bulletin* of June 1962, Inskeep reports "a matter of great interest and concern to all who are interested in the progress of archaeology in Africa in general and the Republic of South Africa in particular... [namely] the closure of the South African Archaeological Survey as a government department, and its transfer to the University of the Witwatersrand" (SAAB 27: 86). The government would continue to pay the salaries of the two research officers and one clerical assistant involved in the transfer, but Inskeep reports being "unable to discover what further financial support, if any, the Government proposes to provide for research". He continues: "We cannot... but deplore this apparent withdrawal of the Government's moral support for archaeology in South Africa, nor can we understand the reasons for this change". He notes that: "there is hardly a country in the world... in which the government does not play an active and official role in the investigation of its country's past, over and above financial support hidden in grants to universities and museums" (86). The transfer was effected just at the time when plans were announced for the implementation of the Orange River irrigation scheme: Inskeep wonders "who now will be responsible for saving the potentially priceless archaeological documents that must progressively be submerged as this great scheme proceeds?" (86).

The extent to which Inskeep's words echo those of Goodwin a decade earlier is striking. In both the complaint is the same: the withdrawal of government patronage, and "moral support". Both Inskeep and Goodwin were motivated by a clear sense that archaeology had been marginalized by successive apartheid regimes¹⁴. In fact, it

¹⁴. In the following editorial Inskeep offers a retraction on the grounds that he had not been in full possession of the facts. He writes of receiving a letter

from someone acquainted with the facts which makes it clear that the handing over of the Archaeological Survey to the University of the Witwatersrand was not a move dictated by Government, but an arrangement recommended by a small group of scientists advising the Government. We should like therefore to take this opportunity of withdrawing any criticism, actual or implied, of the government, in connection with the transfer, and apologize for any offence that may have been given. (133)

was not until the latter part of the decade of the 1960s that the first of what was to become a flood of new posts were created, and the present contours of the discipline began to take shape.

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The Re-emergence of Archaeology.

Janette Deacon's meticulous review of the development of Stone Age archaeology in South Africa ("Weaving the Fabric of Stone Age Research in Southern Africa", in Robertshaw ed. 1990) usefully documents the "exponential expansion" of the discipline around this time. In 1930 there was a single university post in archaeology, held by John Goodwin. In 1960 there was still only a single university post (Inskeep), and two museum posts. In 1970 there were six university posts, and ten museum posts; and by 1987 there were thirty university posts and twenty-eight museum posts, or a total of almost sixty professional posts in archaeology. According to Deacon this rapid expansion was not accidental, but "was the result of the determined effort of Inskeep and others to see archaeology recognized officially as a profession" (51). In this they were greatly aided "by the fact that [their campaign] coincided with a period of economic boom at Southern African universities and museums" (51). In fact, it appears that by far the more decisive factor was the extraordinary economic growth enjoyed by the apartheid state from the mid-1960s. I would argue that to a great extent archaeology, at least in this stage in its development, was the accidental beneficiary of circumstances in the South African economy.

This growth in employment and research opportunities coincided with the introduction of a new theoretical paradigm in South African archaeology. Deacon notes of Flannery's (1967) prediction that in the next decade "we shall see general systems theory, game theory and locational analysis all applied successfully to American archaeology in spite of the loudest mutterings of the establishment", that "these predictions could be applied equally appropriately to Southern Africa" (53-4).

However, Deacon (1993) writes: "Ray was quite correct in his pessimistic assessment of the situation in 1962. The euphemistic "transfer to new management" was indeed the beginning of the end of the Survey and of government responsibility for archaeology" (78).

The new ideas "filtered through in classic diffusionist ways in the form of literature and visiting scholars" (53). Archaeology in Southern Africa "had deep culture-historical roots and many of the older generation of prehistorians found the new ideas esoteric... [however] Amongst the younger generation of prehistorians, the new paradigm was greeted enthusiastically and certainly changed the course of Later Stone Age research" (54). This new processual emphasis in Stone Age archaeology was manifested in environmental and ecological approaches to the archaeological record. The link with theoretical developments in the metropole came via the Cambridge school of Higgs, Clark and Clarke, and its local graduates, Inskeep and John Parkington (who had arrived from Cambridge in 1966 to take up a teaching post at the University of Cape Town). Even more influential, however, were to be the South African-based faunal studies of Richard Klein.

Deacon writes that the ecological focus of Later Stone Age studies in the 1960s and 1970s was most clearly developed in the work of H.J. Deacon and Parkington. Through a programme of excavation at sites in the Eastern Cape (Scott's Cave, Melkhoutboom, Springs, Highlands), H.J. Deacon was able to reconstruct an extinct Holocene subsistence system based on underground plant foods and hunting (H.J. Deacon 1969, 1972, 1976). This research coincided with and was supported by ethnographic observations made amongst the Kalahari San. H.J. Deacon developed a model of homeostatic plateaux to explain how climate, environment, and human subsistence and artefact systems interacted, "based on systems theory and an explicitly biological concept of positive and negative feedback" (55). Parkington also made use of ethnographic studies of the Kalahari San in constructing a model of seasonal mobility for Holocene hunter-gatherers in the Western Cape. Deacon notes that although his model has changed as various hypotheses have been tested and reformulated, it "remains essentially an ecological approach with ethnographic analogues" (55). Other developments in South African Stone Age studies through the 1970s and 1980s noted by Deacon include: attempts to evolve more objective methods of artefact analysis, motivated in part by the resolutions of the Burg Wartenstein conference; attempts to understand the meaning of assemblage variability (partly inspired by Wiessner's (1983) ethnographic research in the Kalahari); the application of a wide range of archaeometric techniques, including the development of dietary isotope studies; and the attention given to palaeoenvironmental reconstruction.

In a concluding section ("What next?") Deacon follows Flannery by predicting future trends and developments in the discipline. She begins by reiterating the "extraordinarily rich heritage of Stone Age materials" in Southern Africa: "There are more excavated Later Stone Age sites, more ethnographic studies of hunter-gatherers and more full-time archaeologists in Southern Africa than in any other region in sub-Saharan Africa and there remains the potential for a significant contribution to be made to the long history of Later Stone Age people" (57). In terms of theory, she reports an intellectual dissatisfaction with "methods of "number-crunching" stone-tool analyses... that have become abstract, mechanical and lacking in social correlates" (58). It is likely that future research will focus "more on social and ideological explanations for variability than on palaeoenvironments". In the same vein: "The resurgence of interest in historical theory and methods that is in the air... will place greater emphasis on the motivations and actions of prehistoric people and their relationships with their contemporaries and this change in emphasis can only be welcomed" (58).

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The Post-processual Critique.

In calling her study "Weaving the Fabric of Stone Age Research in Southern Africa" Deacon picks up on the organizing metaphor used by Goodwin in his earlier history of archaeology in South Africa, *The Loom of Prehistory* (1946). It was Goodwin's desire to "weave... a patterned fabric" of the development of archaeology by "interweaving elements of time, culture, man and area in the light of past research and publications" (1946: 10, quoted in Deacon 1990: 39). Deacon writes: "Forty years later, one still hopes to weave such a cloth by identifying some of the people, trends and events that have shaped Southern African Stone Age studies" (39). One of the threads in Deacon's study is the social and political context in which Stone Age research has developed in South Africa. She writes, for example: "Archaeologists in Southern Africa and elsewhere are becoming increasingly aware of the influences on their work of the social milieu in which they live " (40). She singles out for mention as instances of the conflict between archaeology and apartheid, the banning of South African and Namibian archaeologists from the World Archaeological Congress in Southampton; and the official myth of the late arrival of Bantu-speaking people in Southern Africa. In noting that "[this myth] has not been the belief of professional

archaeologists whose research, paradoxically, has been funded by the same government that prescribes the school textbooks" (40), she recognises something of the ambiguity of the position of archaeologists in South Africa. However, Deacon seeks to separate out the development of archaeology from the political contexts of apartheid. She specifically rejects Trigger's appellation of "colonial archaeology" to refer to the South African case: "[the] dichotomy between the goals and beliefs of professional archaeologists and the beliefs of other members of the society in which they work must be recognized. To stamp it all as "colonial"... [as Trigger has done] is to overlook the significant differences in attitudes that have developed between those involved directly in archaeological research and the more varied community of the country as a whole" (40). In keeping with this conception of the relatively autonomous development of archaeology her account is one of personalities, events and publications, largely divorced from their social contexts - much in the style, in fact, of Goodwin, whose work she refers to.

The final paper that I wish to refer to in reviewing interpretations of the history of Stone Age archaeology in South Africa is by Aaron Mazel and is called "The Archaeological Past from the Changing Present: Towards a critical assessment of South African Later Stone Age studies from the early 1960s to the early 1980s" (1987). Mazel's paper marks a departure from the tradition of historical review stretching from Goodwin to Janette Deacon in that he places the social context in which approaches to the past are developed at the centre of his paper and of his critique. As though to underline the interconnected nature of past and present in his approach, he prefaces his paper with a quotation from Hodder: "Any reconstruction of the past is a social statement in the present" (1985: 18)¹⁵.

Like Deacon, Mazel documents the shift in South African Later Stone Age studies beginning in the late 1960s towards ecological and environmental approaches to the archaeological record (he notes: "South African LSA archaeology has experienced a radical transformation in the last two decades", 509). This forms the subject of a bold assertion: "South African Later Stone Age (LSA) research appears to have arrived at a crossroads. Archaeologists can either continue to pursue the research aims and interpretations of the last twenty years, or they can change course. The former alternative entails continuing with a predominantly ecological approach ... [the latter]

¹⁵. This is from an essay called "Postprocessual Archaeology", in Schiffer, M.B. (ed) *Advances in Archaeological Method and Theory*, Vol. 8:1-26. New York: Academic Press.

involves the application of social theory to the illumination and understanding of the archaeological record" (504). The argument of Mazel's paper is that the "dominance of ecological and demographic approaches, relying strongly on biological concepts and models", and the associated tendency to regard environmental change as the major source of change in the archaeological record, has had the effect of casting people as "rational, passive actors" in a broader ecological drama, and of locating the stimulus for change... outside humans and their society" (518). More seriously, it has introduced an ahistorical orientation into South African LSA archaeology, and "has been responsible for directing the focus of archaeological research [away] from the explicit study of the human past... [so that] the past of the South African hunter-gatherers has not been important in its own right" (521). Mazel singles out for critique the work of H.J. and J. Deacon and Parkington, who collectively embody this reorientation in South African LSA studies. Although each warns against "oversimplistic" environmental determinism and "one-to-one causal" relationships, Mazel suggests that "closer examination shows that these are the positions ultimately adopted" in their work (514).

Significantly, Mazel notes that the adoption of an ecological paradigm in South African LSA archaeology coincides with a shift in influence from British to North American archaeology. He notes that "LSA archaeologists in South Africa have for the last two decades been substantially influenced by developments in British and American archaeology" (505); however "In the early 1970s... the primary inspirational source of South African LSA archaeology switched from Britain to America" (512). Parkington reportedly considers Binford "to be the most outstanding archaeological thinker of the century" (508). In the light of this influence, Mazel devotes considerable space to analyzing the social context out of which the New Archaeology emerged in the post-war USA. Following Trigger (1981, 1984) he describes the post-war optimism in North American society which was translated into positivist and behaviourist approaches in the social sciences, and in archaeology in a renewed interest in cultural evolutionism. The curtailment of this optimism in the 1960s saw the rise of a number of "middle class movements", most notably the ecology movement which served to focus attention on ecological and demographic issues. "The increasing popularity of the ecological and demographic models saw the rejection of the view that technological innovation is an independent process of rational self-improvement and the guiding force behind cultural evolution. Instead the conservative nature of human society was stressed, as well as the notion that changes in cultural systems only occur in response to external stimuli" (508). Mazel

ends his paper with a list of recommendations for future LSA research: that it "once again become explicitly historical" in orientation; that it "shift from being conducted within a framework of people-to-nature (i.e. ecological terms) to a people-to-people perspective (i.e. social terms)"; and that it "must start giving greater consideration to social theoretical frameworks to assist in elucidating and explaining the human past" (522).

What Mazel's paper represents, then, is the voice of revisionism, and more particularly of post-processualism, in South African LSA archaeology. It is not so much a novel critique, as an application to the South African situation of a more general critique (Mazel refers to Tilley (1981), Friedman (1982) and Miller (1982), among others). Nevertheless, his account is useful for its close reading of the social context out of which the North American New Archaeology developed, and for the attention which he gives to charting the direction and nature of theoretical influences from archaeology's metropolises. Astonishingly, however, Mazel manages not to mention apartheid, or to discuss local social contexts in any detail. It is as though the sole determining factor in the development of South African LSA archaeology has been theoretical developments in a distant metropole. This is all the more astonishing since in his conclusion Mazel reiterates "the need for archaeologists to develop a contemporary critical awareness of their discipline" (522). To be fair, he goes on to write an important and critical study of representations of the archaeological past in apartheid school history textbooks. Nevertheless, implicit in this paper is the assumption that the development of LSA archaeology in South Africa from the early 1960s to the early 1980s can be understood apart from social and political developments in South Africa in the same period.

Ironically, Mazel's paper covers a period in which the structure of employment and the nature of the discipline were profoundly transformed, directly as a result of developing political and economic circumstances in South Africa - as Janette Deacon is able to show in her less theoretically self-conscious paper. More damagingly, by ignoring local social and political contexts, Mazel misses what must seem to be the obvious point to be drawn from his study: that is, that one of the critically enabling factors in the "exponential expansion" of the discipline documented by Deacon was, precisely, the introduction of the new theoretical paradigm. As Mazel reminds us it produced an ahistorical and dehumanised version of the past, phrased in a difficult and technical language. It need hardly be said that such a specialist discourse was

unlikely to pose a threat to the ideological interests of the apartheid state - as indeed proved to be the case¹⁶.

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Accommodation and Compromise in Iron Age Archaeology.

The other significant division of South African archaeology (besides archaeometry which has yet to be the subject of an historical review article, and Historical Archaeology which is in its infancy in this country¹⁷) is so-called Iron Age archaeology, which I consider with reference to two papers by Martin Hall: The one, "The Burden of Tribalism: The Social Context of Southern African Iron Age studies", published in *American Antiquity* (49(3), 1984), is the most important study of the relationship between archaeology and apartheid to date, and had a considerable impact. The other is called "Hidden History: Iron Age Archaeology in Southern Africa", and was published in Robertshaw's book (1990), where it forms a companion chapter to Janette Deacon's review of the archaeology of the Stone Age¹⁸.

Like Mazel's paper, Hall's two essays mark an obvious departure from the tradition of historical review in archaeology - although in a different direction. Hall tackles the relationship between archaeology and apartheid head-on, unlike the previous papers with their skittishness about political contexts; and as though to signal this difference he begins both papers with the same assertion:

¹⁶. A significant aspect of the attractiveness of the New Archaeology was that it allowed archaeologists to write research reports in an overtly scientific language more likely to appeal to the priorities of potential funders. Not only in South Africa but in Anglo-American archaeology in general, the expansion in the discipline beginning in the late 1960s was built on the back of this new alignment with the hard sciences. In another of Trigger's papers from the 1980s ("Prehistoric Archaeology and American Society", 1986) he links the development of the New Archaeology to "the desire of American archaeologists to conform to a more prestigious model of scholarly behaviour, especially as the National Science Foundation became a major source of funding" (201).

¹⁷. Nevertheless it has been the subject of a review article by Martin Hall. See: "The archaeology of colonial settlement in Southern Africa" (*Annual Review of Anthropology* 22: 177-200).

¹⁸. In fact, these two papers were written closer together than their dates suggest. Robertshaw's book took three years to reach publication (Martin Hall, pers. comm.).

In those countries where the archaeology of the colonized is practised by descendants of the colonizers, the study of the past must have a political dimension... but current literature describing research south of the Zambezi River of precolonial farming societies (by convention, termed the Iron Age) shows little acknowledgement that the social environment of the investigator may play a part in defining issues and colouring interpretations, or indeed, that the results themselves may have diverse political implications. (1984: 455)

One of the illusions of Southern African archaeology is that the past can be neutral; that artefacts will "speak for themselves" and that archaeologists can discern a history of past communities that is "scientifically" derived and free of bias. This notion has been challenged for other contexts and seems particularly inappropriate for a region where history has long been a contested terrain. (1990: 59)

In "The Burden of Tribalism" the problem that Hall sets himself is the persistence of a concern with tribal diversity in research carried out in South Africa, and particularly in Iron Age archaeology. He points to the contrast with post-independence Zimbabwe where the idea of tribalism was suppressed in official ideologies. The answer that Hall comes up with - that this reflects a continuation of the concerns of colonial science - depends upon him demonstrating an essential continuity between early ethnohistorical and archaeological work and contemporary archaeology.

Like ethnohistorical research elsewhere in the period, colonial ethnohistory in South Africa was carried out within a social evolutionary framework: "in common with contemporaries working in other parts of the world, southern African ethnohistorians assumed that humanity everywhere had passed through a common sequence and that "primitive" societies represented earlier stages of the technologically advanced civilizations. In addition, it was believed that such societies were uncreative, violent, incapable of change, and that any stimulus for development must have come from outside" (456). Hall quotes Stow, who wrote of "Bantu origins" that : "the seething mass of equatorial life [was hemmed in by Mediterranean civilization to the north] until amid internal heavings and internecine wars another storm wave rose which, beaten from the north, would naturally expend its fury in the opposite direction... until they came into contact with strange white faced men still more invincible than they had imagined themselves to be, against whom, with many minor fluctuations, the tidal wave of rude barbarism beat in vain" (456). This model of the primitive, and especially the idea that positive change originated from outside the continent, provided strong support for the politics of imperialism. Hall cites the example of early

interpretations of the site of Great Zimbabwe, coinciding with the colonial conquest of Rhodesia; and of the resurgence of this "settler paradigm" under the Rhodesian Front government.

It is a relatively simple matter to demonstrate the persistence of colonial ideology in settler histories and popular accounts, but Hall's real target is contemporary Iron Age studies in South Africa. To make this connection he traces the baggage of colonial ethnohistory through the early "systematic archaeology" of the 1950s and 1960s, in the work of Roger Summers and Keith Robinson, and the slightly earlier work of J.F. Schofield. Interestingly, Hall suggests that the nature of the archaeological evidence itself rendered it susceptible to the categories of colonial ethnography: "The ethnographic record, always a lure to the archaeologist, had been defined in the terms of social evolution and instead of emphasising the complexity of cultural variation, some ethnographers had seen clearly delineated tribes, each with fixed attributes such as language, physical type, and social custom. The archaeologists, keen to bring their potsherds to life, seized on these tribal groupings as explanatory of artifactual categories" (460). Hall also comments on the importance of the "culture" concept in this regard (Summers was a student under Childe at the Institute of Archaeology in 1946 and 1947).

However, the real interest of the paper lies in the manner in which Hall outlines the complexity of the position of these archaeologists. The methods of Summers and Robinson were considered radical by their contemporaries, and they had adopted a position which set them against settler ideology; yet, at the same time "[their] models for the Iron Age conformed to the ethnographic framework established within a very different, evolutionist, mode of thought". Hall traces this dualism to "the wider political environment". He relates it on the one hand to a "division between colonial ideology and metropolitan archaeology" (459), of which the archaeologist Gertrude Caton-Thompson, with her scorn for settler opinion, was the embodiment. On the other hand he relates it to the fact of their being uncomfortably situated in the political and ideological fault-lines which characterised colonial society - suspicious of a crudely hegemonic settler ideology, yet unable to embrace the politics of resistance. Hall writes that: "Although Schofield, Robinson, and Summers were strongly influenced by British values... they were subsequently to conduct their archaeological research fully within the social environment of the white ruling classes of southern Africa" (460). Further on he notes that: "while many archaeologists were opposed to the use of history and prehistory for the justification of white nationalistic policies, most are

probably also opposed to black nationalism, which threatens existing social and economic orders and therefore the institutions from which archaeological research is conducted" (462). This was to be one of the defining tensions, not only in Iron Age archaeology, but more generally in the discipline.

Hall sees the ambiguously situated nature of South African Iron Age archaeology being reflected in two ways in the current concerns of the discipline. The first is in an emphasis on the "antiquity and indigeneness" of the southern African Iron Age - a specific repudiation of the white nationalist position. The second is in "an emphasis on the diversity and complexity of regional variations within the Iron Age, thus rejecting the black nationalist stress on unity" (462). He sees the methodology for this regionalism being established by the work of Schofield, Summers, Robinson and Mason, and continued in the work of Maggs. However, writes Hall, it is "in the adaptations made to theory and methodology developed in the Americas that the assumption of tribal diversity is most apparent, for these modifications allow the full integration of archaeology and ethnology and hence the emphasis on diversity and changelessness" (462). In the most controversial aspect of his paper he singles out for particular critique the work of Tom Huffman, the foremost interpreter of the southern African Iron Age. He does so both with respect to Huffman's appropriation of the concept of the ceramic "tradition" (developed by Rouse (1957) and others for the classification and description of ceramic sequences); and with respect to a structuralist turn in his more recent work which has seen him develop Kuper's (1980) notion of a "Southern Bantu Cattle Area". In line with the assumptions of earlier systematic archaeologists, "Huffman is emphatic about the connection between his archaeological units and societies observed by ethnographers... [believing that] the patterned behaviour represented by ceramics ensures that the archaeologist holds the key to societal identification" (463).

Hall notes of the form of structuralism favoured by Huffman and his followers, that "in seeking universal processes of human mental organization, [it] can become ahistorical and as such is particularly attractive in an intellectual and political environment that tends to seek stasis rather than change in the past of indigenous communities" (463). The upshot of this is that: "With this emphasis on the generality and timelessness of the African past, Iron Age archaeology has completed a circle, moving closer to social evolutionism than at any time since Gertrude Caton Thompson and those who followed her initiated the systematic study of the later prehistory of the continent" (463).

Hall picks up many of these themes and concerns in his 1990 essay, "'Hidden History': Iron Age Archaeology in Southern Africa". Early in the paper he restates his underlying premise in useful form: "I start from the premise that *all* readings of the past are intimately connected to the present. This is not to suggest that history is mere propaganda, or that archaeologists do not carefully assemble and weigh information before coming to reasoned conclusions... by and large the tie between present and past is more subtle. The concerns of the present become the problems of history, and unarticulated assumptions about the nature of human society - "common-sense" understandings of the present - become the links which connect fragmentary archaeological evidence" (59).

As in his earlier paper he identifies a key ideological cleavage between settler opinion and an essentially metropolitan tradition of archaeology transplanted onto the colonies. This reaches a kind of symbolic climax in the confrontation between Caton Thompson and Raymond Dart at the Pretoria congress of the British Association for the Advancement of Science in 1929. Caton Thompson was fresh from a season of excavation at Great Zimbabwe, armed with conclusive evidence regarding the African origin of the ruins. According to a *Cape Times* report (3 August 1929) Dart responded to her presentation by "delivering remarks in a tone of awe-inspiring violence... He spoke in an outburst of curiously unscientific indignation and charged the startled chairman... with having called upon none but the supporters of Miss Caton Thompson's theory" (quoted in Hall 1990: 63). Hall notes that: "The clash between settler opinion on the African past and MacIver and Caton Thompson's conclusions from their work in Southern Rhodesia set a theme that was to run through Southern African archaeology until the present day. On the one hand was a popular colonial consciousness, heavily influenced by the economy and ideology of domination. Opposed were a small group of archaeologists, whose methodological standards were drawn from the international scholastic community, but who were themselves part of the dominating group" (63).

The central theme running through the rest of the paper then becomes the manner in which successive researchers have accommodated this contradiction in their work. Hall suggests that this was done in one of two ways: "by avoiding the contested ground and researching less controversial periods of antiquity, or by retreating into highly technical analyses which effectively excluded all but the acolytes of the profession" (63). Thus, he writes of Schofield that although he "saw his task as the

extension backwards in time of current ethnographies, his typological categories were sanitized by numeration; labels such as "NC2D", "ST1" and "NT1" were hardly likely to affront the settler consciousness" (64). Of the research at Mapungubwe, the location of one of the earliest state societies in Southern Africa, he writes that it "was soon shrouded by technique and technical controversy" (64). And he notes of Robinson and Summers that "like others before them, [they] avoided many potential clashes with settler ideology by using highly technical frameworks for conceptualizing and reporting their results" (64).

Of particular interest in the paper is Hall's more fine-grained analysis of political and economic contexts in Southern Africa in the period of the development of Iron Age archaeology. This allows him to attempt a more detailed periodization of Iron Age research, and to set South African archaeology apart from the development of archaeology in Southern Rhodesia. It also allows him to pick up a series of shifts in official ideologies, rather than resorting to a blanket notion of "settler ideology". In particular, Hall identifies a period of the efflorescence of Iron Age research in Southern Rhodesia in the post-war years. This was the product of a very different administrative response to the rapid industrial expansion stimulated by the war. Unlike South Africa, the United Federal Party government in Southern Rhodesia sought to move "from the concept of separate development towards the idea of "racial partnership"" (66). This was to be effected "by such reforms as the recognition of black trade unions, increased expenditure on university education and agricultural reform", and attempts in the 1950s to foster the creation of an African middle class and bourgeoisie. Hall writes: "It was consistent with these circumstances that, in contrast with South Africa, Iron Age research should be actively promoted by the Southern Rhodesian colonial administration" (66). In 1962 the United Federal Party lost the election to the Rhodesian Front, which broke from colonial control in 1965 with the Unilateral Declaration of Independence - "The accompanying ideological change was sharp, and had an immediate effect on Iron Age research. Rather than contributing to the development and stability of the black bourgeoisie, any suggestion of precolonial historical achievement was now seen as seditious" (66). Archaeology was attacked in the Rhodesian parliament and in the press, and leading archaeologists chose to leave the country, rather than stay in the face of adverse opinion from "an establishment which had embraced South African techniques of state security" (67).

In South Africa by contrast, the late 1960s saw a rapid expansion in public funding for archaeological research. Hall writes that the increase in "state revenues from the 1960s economic boom and the higher gold price, led to increased government expenditure on research, museums, public buildings, the arts, etc.: the cultural apparatus necessary to present the image of a "modern state"" (68). In 1967 the quasi-goveremental Council for Scientific and Industrial Research funded the establishment of a rock art recording project and a radiocarbon dating laboratory. Departments of archaeology were established at the Transvaal Museum in 1969 and the Natal Museum in 1972, both of which were to become focal points for Iron Age research. As a result: "By 1974, when the boom years ended and South Africa entered a severe economic recession, the professional basis for Iron Age research had been firmly established" (68).

Hall heads his account of the development of Iron Age archaeology in the 1980s "Crisis". In his reading of events it is a period in which the contradictions in South African archaeology asserted themselves, just as in the broader society the contradictions of apartheid were to more forcefully assert themselves. A defining moment for archaeology in this country was the 1983 meeting of the Southern African Association of Archaeologists in Gaborone, Botswana. The Association had been renamed from the original South African Association of Archaeologists, and its members included archaeologists from Zambia, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland and Mozambique. As Hall tells it: "delegates from Mozambique forced a resolution seeking the condemnation by the Association of apartheid and other forms of discrimination. Although the majority of delegates, mostly from South Africa, were openly opposed to the racial policies of the South African government, they had little taste for the explicit involvement of their discipline in the political arena" (75). The motion was never put to the vote, however delegates from Mozambique and Zimbabwe resigned from the Association, "and many others left the meeting feeling that internationalist ideals were no longer attainable".

In the years that followed the political crisis in South Africa was to deepen. From August 1984 it took the form of violent clashes with the state security forces in all the major metropolitan areas. Suddenly South Africa and the anti-apartheid struggle were present in the world media in ways which they had never formerly been. One result of this international attention was the disinviting of South African and Namibian delegates from the World Archaeological Congress in 1986, an event which more

than any other was to focus attention on the relationship between archaeology and apartheid in South Africa.

Hall notes that this crisis of hegemony in the South African state coincided with a general crisis within archaeology. A "revival in the application of Marxist theory to archaeology [in the early 1980s]... and a linked concern with the social contexts of archaeological knowledge, spurred by campaigns for land rights in Australia and North America" had fed into a revisionist critique within the discipline. South African archaeologists responded in a number of ways to these various pressures: One group formed the Archaeological Awareness Workshop, a group "committed to making the results of research far more widely available" (76)¹⁹. Others aligned themselves with the Zulu nationalist movement Inkatha, or turned to historical archaeology "as a means both of tracing the origins of oppression and of challenging white glorification of the colonial past". Hall writes: "Although diverse, these approaches are unified in recognizing that the old archaeology will be inappropriate for the new South Africa that is emerging" (76). Hall was writing at a time when political transformation was beneath the horizon of visibility, nevertheless his comments are typically prescient. His final sentence contains what must be the earliest usage in the discipline of that staple of contemporary political discourse: "the new South Africa".

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Discussion.

I. Parallels, Interconnections.

A number of points for discussion emerge from this historical review of the development of archaeology in South Africa. The first is how complex, ambiguous, and at times how contradictory has been the relationship between archaeology and apartheid. These points of contradiction and conflict include, in the first place, the relation between a metropolitan archaeological tradition, and the settler societies in which it is practised - a point which Hall has been particularly successful in

¹⁹. This was a largely failed initiative. I discuss the work of the Archaeological Awareness Workshop and its more successful successor, the Archaeology Workshop, in Chapter 5.

uncovering in the context of the historiography of Iron Age archaeology. In the second place there is the fact of an indigenous, African archaeology being articulated by practitioners drawn from a white, settler minority. This promises to be a central point of contention in a post-apartheid context, as it has been elsewhere. Finally - a point particular to South African archaeology - there is the imminence of a critique of apartheid ideology in the subject matter of archaeology, and at the same time the discipline's near total dependence on the apartheid state for funding via the universities and museums. Taken as a whole, it is a relationship whose themes and motifs have been accommodation and compromise, rather than the heroic themes of struggle, sacrifice and subversion which are more commonly invoked.

Of all the generally held assumptions regarding the relationship between archaeology and apartheid, the most strenuously defended has been the idea of the essential distance between the discipline and the political contexts in which it has existed. Yet, one is struck by how closely the fortunes of archaeology in South Africa have followed the political and economic fortunes of apartheid. If one were to graph the progress of archaeology in South Africa the line of the graph would show a steady rise through the 1920s and 1930s (the arrival of Goodwin, the establishment of a local terminology, the founding of the Archaeological Survey), reaching a temporary high in the mid-1940s under the patronage of Smuts. The 1948 election which brought the Nationalists to power signalled a change in fortunes for the discipline, which endured through the low points of the 1950s (the humiliation of the Second Pan African Congress) and the 1960s (the closure of the Archaeological Survey). It was only in the late 1960s that the real basis of the discipline was laid with a rapid increase in the numbers of professional positions. A number of commentators have noted that this coincided with a period of boom in the South African economy (Hall 1990, J. Deacon 1990, H.J. Deacon 1993). More generally, we might note that the structure and contours of the discipline as we know it were mapped in a period when apartheid was at its most prosperous and confident.

Colin Bundy, among the foremost of South Africa's revisionist historians and one of the most intelligent commentators on the political-economy of apartheid, heads his account of the period 1962-1972, "Decade of Dominance" (in *Re-Making the Past; New Perspectives in South African History*, 1986). He begins: "Happy days were here again - if you happened to be a government supporter, a capitalist entrepreneur, an investor in the stock exchange, a home-owner and consumer in the boom economy. Once recovered from the Sharpeville hiccup, the South African

economy resumed the impressive growth that it had demonstrated in the 1950s - but in overdrive" (81). GNP grew at a real rate of over 6% per annum, a figure equalled by only a handful of other capitalist economies over the same period. Total direct foreign investment in the South African economy more than doubled between 1960 and 1972: "Dollars, pounds, marks, francs and yen poured in: here was an economy where growth and profits were high, unionisation and industrial unrest virtually absent, the currency hard, and the market buoyant".

Intimately linked with this resurgent economy was the strong state, personified by B.J. Vorster (Minister of Justice, and from 1966 Prime Minister): "Increased spending on the security forces; wide new powers for the security police; a barrage of punitive security laws, detentions without trial, torture, and the shackling of the courts - these were the political developments of the early sixties" (81). The banned nationalist movements embarked on sabotage campaigns, but these achieved very little: "by 1965 the extra-parliamentary opposition had been routed. Its leaders were in jail or in exile; its rank and file intimidated and demoralised". Bundy quotes a telling statistic from Bill Johnson: "At some point around 1970 white South Africans overtook Californians as the single most affluent group in the world" (R.W. Johnson, *How Long Will South Africa Survive?*, Macmillan 1976). The point that I wish to register is that archaeology, no less than other aspects of white South African life, was the beneficiary of this high point in the development of racial capitalism. Its ideological function was to reflect the modernity of the newly ascendent South African state, just as Inskeep had foretold²⁰.

²⁰. Some points of contact with developments in Anglo-American archaeology are provided by Trigger (in "Prehistoric Archaeology and American Society", 1986). He reports the "enormous escalation in archaeological activities and in the number of professional archaeologists in North America since the 1960s" (203). The initial growth occurred through universities as part of the post-war explosion in tertiary education. After this growth slowed down in the early 1970s, archaeologists continued to find employment in government posts and private consulting firms as the idea of cultural resource management took hold, and as government concern with protecting cultural heritage began to include Native American remains. "At the same time, there was a massive... increase in overall government funding of archaeological research" (203). Interestingly, Trigger notes that relatively large sums of money were made available for archaeological work by various U.S. federal government relief agencies in the 1930s in the context of the economic depression and public works programmes. The labour-intensive nature of archaeological fieldwork made it a desirable form of employment for unskilled labour. Many sites were excavated in salvage operations carried out in areas threatened with inundation as a result of dam construction. In South Africa the 1930s similarly saw the direct

It becomes possible to sketch a kind of parallel history between South African archaeology and the career of apartheid, lining up terms and events in their respective developments. The 1930s were a formative period for both archaeology and apartheid in South Africa. Then in the mid-1940s one saw the institutionalization of archaeology with the founding of the Archaeological Society and the establishment of the Bulletin, and in 1948 of racism, with the election of a National Party government. The first Pan-African Congress on Prehistory in 1947 represents a high point for colonialist archaeology in South Africa, and in Africa more generally. The intellectual milieu of the time was closely connected to the politics of empire. One saw archaeologists in widely separated colonial centres maintaining a network of professional contacts which spanned the continent. Their task was, as it were, to stitch together the prehistoric chronology of the continent, drawing Africa into alignment with the processes of world historical development as they understood it. This was an intellectual project whose roots lay in the Enlightenment, in that it reflected a belief in the penetrating powers of European science, but also in European imperialism. In establishing the essential unity of humanity, these scholars at the same time established its essential inequality.

The immediate aftermath of the 1948 election for the discipline was the withdrawal of government support for the Second Pan African Congress, and for the discipline more generally. The 1960s began explosively with Sharpeville, but also with the arrival of Inskeep who was to lead the renaissance of local archaeology in the space provided by the crushing of resistance to the apartheid state. The real turning point for archaeology came with the economic resurgence of the mid-1960s, which saw the apartheid state directing part of its surplus into the service sector, including museums and universities. There followed a period in which some of the most important archaeological work was done in this country. The Deacons explored the archaeology of the Southern Cape, and Parkington began his research project in the Cederberg and the Cape West Coast. Perhaps most significant was the opening up of the archaeology of the Iron Age.

The crisis of apartheid, which might be said to have begun in the mid-1970s, reached its sharpest point in the township revolts of the mid-1980s. Their immediate outcome for archaeology was the barring of South African archaeologists from the World

intervention of the government in promoting archaeology (for example, in the creation of the Archaeological Bureau) - although under very different conditions.

Archaeological Congress in 1986. Finally, the events of 1990 and the election of 1994 have set in train their own consequences for South African archaeology²¹.

Tim Maggs alludes to this parallel history on a more personal level in an autobiographical sketch headed "Three decades of Iron Age research in South Africa: some personal reflections" (SAAB 48, 1993)²². Like Schrire he describes that nodal moment in 1960 when the future pattern of apartheid was set.

The year 1960 was an important one for the development of archaeology in South Africa for it saw Ray Inskeep's arrival at the University of Cape Town, and the first moves towards a renaissance in local archaeology.

For South Africa, 1960 was also a significant year because, with Sharpeville, Langa, the banning of the African National Congress and Pan African Congress, the unmistakably ugly face of apartheid was exposed. Macmillan's "Winds of Change" speech made no impression on Verwoerd's granite wall, and South Africa took a right turn into increasing isolation. (70)

1960 also happened to be the year in which Maggs entered the University of Cape Town as a student. He had been in England and describes the claustrophobia of returning to South Africa: "I had just completed five years of schooling in England at a progressive school where most of my friends and co-students were from a spectrum of Commonwealth countries. Returning to South Africa was by comparison a sombre and claustrophobic experience. In those days South African Airways provided passengers arriving at Jan Smuts Airport with an official booklet to justify

²¹. A more oblique comment on the events of the mid-1980s comes in the form of John Parkington and Andrew Smith's guest editorial in the December 1986 issue of the *Bulletin* (SAAB 41: 43-4). Arguing that archaeologists need to examine the influence of present contexts on their reconstructions of the past, they write:

In our view archaeologists are not impassive and neutral conduits passing on the past to a wider audience but are active and motivated participants in an industry the business of which is creating versions of the past. Archaeology does not occur in a social vacuum. (43)

A context-free version of the past is not possible. What is possible is a greater awareness of the contexts in which prehistories or histories are made by one class or group, and received by others. (44)

The significance of their editorial lies less in its content - which is hardly new or surprising when set alongside developments in post-processual archaeology - than in its context, in the staid and cautious pages of the *Bulletin*.

²². This was one of a number of papers written to honour Ray Inskeep, in a special edition of the *Bulletin* published in 1993 (SAAB 48).

apartheid and segregated facilities were ubiquitous" (1993: 70). A particular memory from his first year as a student is watching "Air Force planes patrolling over Langa as part of the splendid view from the steps of Jameson Hall". This was in the aftermath of the Langa demonstration and the declaration of the State of Emergency. Twenty-five years later as a first year student at the University of Cape Town I was to have a similar experience, this time in the context of the township revolts of the mid-1980s and the revival of the State of Emergency. Looking down at the pillars of smoke rising from the glittering silence of the Cape Flats I was made aware of the ambiguity of my own position, as a student and an activist, caught somewhere between the status of observer and participant.

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II. Archaeology and Society.

My second point concerns the nature of the deeper effects of apartheid on the discipline of archaeology in South Africa (granting that such deeper effects exist). In "The Burden of Tribalism" Hall argues that the effects of apartheid are to be found at a conceptual level, in the manner in which archaeologists of the Iron Age in southern Africa have chosen to theorise their material. Yet my own impression is that these effects have been ameliorated, at least since the late-1980s, by the availability of a revisionist critique. This has been led in part by Hall himself - his *The Changing Past: Farmers, Kings and Traders in Southern Africa 200-1860* (1987) constitutes a comprehensive reinterpretation of the southern African Iron Age in the light of some of the criticisms in his 1984 paper. Similarly, Janette Deacon comments with respect to Hall's paper that Stone Age archaeology in South Africa has remained relatively untainted by apartheid in the ways that Hall describes, existing as it does at a greater historical remove from the present. I would argue that current South African archaeology is not noticeably distinct from the archaeology of the metropolises in terms of its theoretical concerns and approaches - indeed it has been a point of pride within the discipline locally that it should so seamlessly reproduce Anglo-American archaeology.

Rather, I want to argue that the real effects of apartheid on archaeology in South Africa - if you like, the manner in which it has marked it off, and set it apart from other archaeologies - lies in the nature of the relationship between archaeology and

society. To pursue this argument I shall refer to three groups: the first is the circle of archaeological practitioners, which in South Africa means members of the Southern African Association of Archaeologists (SA3), the professional body of archaeologists in this country. The second is a group which we might call archaeology's community of interest, lay people with a direct interest in the discipline. They would consist largely (although not entirely) of members of the Archaeological Society of Southern Africa. The third group is society considered as a whole, and the role that archaeology might reasonably be expected to play in the life of such a group.

It has become a truism of colonial archaeologies that their practitioners tend to be drawn from a settler minority. However, South African archaeology presents us with an extreme instance of this phenomenon. Of the 116 members registered by the Southern African Association of Archaeologists in June 1993 - an appropriate moment for a census since it immediately precedes the 1994 election - 109 are white. Of the seven black archaeologists three come from countries outside of South Africa, and one comes from what was then the nominally independent Transkei, leaving three black South African archaeologists. There is a single black woman archaeologist in South Africa (counted among the three) - overall women number 35 (or just over 30%) of the membership. The statistic that emerges is that after more than 70 years of professional archaeology in South Africa, since the arrival of Goodwin in 1923, the discipline remains 98% white.

The membership of the Archaeological Society - as accurate an indication as any of archaeology's community of interest - presents a similar profile. In the course of their 1986 guest editorial Parkinson and Smith note that: "The membership of the South African Archaeological Society includes by definition those with a proclaimed interest in the past and reflects the archaeological community in South Africa as a whole by having very few black members" (SAAB 41: 43, 1986). My own more recent contacts with this group confirm a membership which is almost exclusively white - and one might add, middle-class, elderly and Anglophile.

However, it is with respect to society as a whole and its relationship to archaeology in South Africa that the effects of apartheid are most strikingly illuminated. Here I must refer to my own experience both as a university educator and as a public educator and spectator of popular culture and the media. This has served to convince me of a widespread phenomenon in South African society: that is, an ignorance of - and more - an indifference towards the versions of the past produced by archaeologists.

This is not at all the same thing as an indifference towards the past in general. Indeed, the extraordinary nature of this observation becomes apparent when set against two further observations: that archaeology remains one of the few routes to recovering significant parts of "black" historical experience; and that the whole field of history, memory and heritage has been an intensely contested one in South African society. However, instead of archaeological narratives, I would contend that South Africans have directed their curiosity about the past, and particularly about the precolonial past, towards more informal folk and popular histories. Archaeology, both as a set of techniques and a body of theory, and as a means of reconstructing the long narrative of South African history, remains the subject of popular ignorance and indifference.

I go on to discuss two instances of the alienation between archaeology and society in South Africa, each of them involving very different constituencies. The first is a phenomenon noted by Hall and reinforced by my own experience - that is, the absence of archaeological references from the discourse of national liberation in South Africa. The second is a phenomenon which I want to call the re-definition of national heritage under apartheid.

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Black Consciousness and Pre-Colonial Archaeology.

In "Hidden History" (1990) Hall notes of the Iron Age archaeology of the 1970s that "The writing of the precolonial archaeology of the sub-continent, achieved largely within a decade, was a remarkable achievement. But accompanying the success of conferences, meetings and academic publications was an equally remarkable contradiction" (1990: 72). The "liberal germ, from which the florescence of Iron Age archaeology had stemmed, had been outrage at the conscious distortion of history to form a part of apartheid ideology"(72); yet, "there was no attempt made to make the new archaeological synthesis accessible either to challenge settler consciousness or to serve black nationalist aspirations" (73). Indeed, the "extent of the distance between professional archaeology and the wider community is evident in the failure of the new Iron Age synthesis - potentially one of the most politically significant branches of archaeology in the world - to make any political impact" (73). He writes of the "irrelevance" of the new work in the revival of black nationalism in the 1970s

under the banner of the Black Consciousness movement: "Black Consciousness emphasized the need for self-identity in order to counter the cultural impoverishment of colonialism and apartheid. It would be logical to expect that the new understanding of the Iron Age, directly contradicting apartheid history, would become important in Black Consciousness philosophy". Instead, "an abstract, utopian vision of the precolonial past developed". Hall quotes Biko, the foremost articulator of Black Consciousness, who writes that the "fundamental aspects of pure African culture" include an emphasis on the individual, on communalism, an ignorance of poverty, and a "people particularly close to nature" (in "Some African culture concepts"). Hall's astute comment is that this constitutes a "return to "merrie Africa"" (73).

In finding reasons for this "isolation of the results of Iron Age research from popular consciousness", Hall places the blame squarely on the shoulders of local practitioners. In the first place, he writes that "the effectiveness of apartheid segregation made it difficult for academics - almost exclusively white and working in segregated research institutions and universities - to communicate the results of their work to the majority of the population" (73). That is, apartheid placed certain physical and logistical difficulties in the way of white archaeologists. In the second place he refers to the ideological contradiction faced by South African archaeologists in "being part of the dominant minority while at the same time contesting its view of history". This resulted in "the tight parcelling of archaeological information in a technical form that made it unintelligible beyond the profession" (73). In the third place he notes that "archaeology in Southern Africa was part of a "world system", with its practitioners looking outwards at international methodological and theoretical concerns". This meant that research projects in Iron Age archaeology "were as much addresses to the general world of scholarship as they were contributions to the history of those whose history had been so systematically denied" (74).

Each of these points is correct as far as they go, however Hall's comments need to be qualified by two further observations: the first is that the apartheid itself acted to alienate a sense of the archaeological past from South African life and historical consciousness. The second observation (which I take up in section III of this discussion) is that South African archaeologists were not alone in this interpretation of their social responsibility, but acted according to the precepts of a broader body of archaeological theory.

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The Re-definition of National Heritage.

The details of the manipulation and misrepresentation of the pre-colonial past under apartheid are well known. In another essay Steve Biko has famously written that:

the history of the black man in this country is most disappointing to read. It is presented merely as a long succession of defeats. The Xhosas were thieves who went to war for stolen property; the Boers never provoked the Xhosas but merely went on "punitive expeditions" to teach the thieves a lesson. Heroes like Makana who were essentially revolutionaries are painted as superstitious trouble-makers who lied to the people about bullets turning into water. Great nation-builders like Shaka are cruel tyrants who frequently attacked smaller tribes for no reason but for some sadistic purpose. Not only is there no objectivity in the history taught us but there is frequently an appalling misrepresentation of facts that sicken even the uninformed student. (1978: 95)

The specific instance of manipulation that I want to explore here concerns the marginalization of the archaeological past under apartheid through the process of the re-definition of national heritage. It is possible to trace this process of re-definition through the changing provision made for heritage management under successive South African regimes.

When the Bureau of Archaeology was founded in 1935 it was made responsible not only for the archaeology of the Union, but also for its national monuments and heritage sites. Van Riet Lowe, as first director of the Bureau, was automatically appointed secretary to the Commission for the Preservation of Natural and Historical Monuments, Relics and Antiquities (or the Historical Monuments Commission). Appointments to the Commission itself were honorary and were made by the Minister of National Education, so that the day-to-day management of national heritage sites fell on the shoulders of the Bureau. When B.D. Malan succeeded Van Riet Lowe as director in 1954 he complained that he "found it necessary to give more and more of my time to the Historical Monuments Commission" (1970: 91), and that he had to leave it to his professional officer, Revel Mason, to explore the archaeology of the Transvaal. With the management of national heritage in the hands of professional archaeologists, a proportionately high number of archaeological sites from the pre-colonial period were selected for declaration as national monuments - 14% of the total declared national monuments in the years 1936-1948 (J. Deacon 1993).

When the national Archaeological Survey was disbanded in 1962 the Archaeological Survey function was split from the Historical Monuments Commission which moved to Cape Town, still with Malan as secretary. Mason joined the staff of the University of the Witwatersrand and was later appointed director of the Archaeological Research Unit where the Survey collections were housed. Deacon notes that this constituted an effective demotion of the Archaeological Survey, "which had once been on a par with the Botanical Survey, the Geological Survey and other government funded bodies" (1993: 79). It was never adequately replaced, either by the National Monuments Commission or the Archaeological Research Unit: "Absence of a central organization of this kind meant that rescue operations, such as the one by Sampson along the middle Orange River before the building of the H.F. Verwoerd Dam had to be financed and staffed on an *ad hoc* basis" (J. Deacon 1990: 50).

More importantly, it signalled a shift in priorities away from archaeology in the conceptualization and management of national heritage. At the time the Historical Monuments Commission moved to Cape Town, plans were made for changes to the law relating to historical monuments. These were promulgated under the new National Monuments Act (Act no. 28 of 1969), which replaced the Historical Monuments Commission with the National Monuments Council (NMC). Deacon notes that with the new Act the staffing of the NMC changed. Instead of a secretary to the Council, there was now a director with several professional officers (the Council remained and its members continued to function in an honorary capacity). She writes: "With this growth, however, the emphasis on archaeology has waned. The first two Secretaries of the Commission, Van Riet Lowe and Malan, had both been archaeologists, but the Directors who were appointed after Malan had retired were conservation managers and historians" (79). A.J.B. Humphries was appointed to the NMC as archaeologist in 1977 when the professional staff consisted of a director, two historians and an archaeologist. When he left in 1979 his place was taken by Jalmar Rudner, an architect with an established interest in archaeology through his association with the Archaeological Society. However, he "soon found that his architectural skills were much in demand and he was increasingly drawn into the sphere of building conservation and surveys of country towns that took him away from archaeology" (79). Deacon notes that: "The architectural focus of the staff was emphasized anew with the amendment to the [Monuments] Act in 1986 which required that plans for alterations to any buildings older than 50 years had to be approved by the NMC. This amendment substantially altered the work load of NMC

staff members and effectively pushed archaeology even further from the list of priorities" (79). She introduces a personal note when she writes, somewhat despairingly, "In 1989, I was appointed as NMC archaeologist at the head office when Jalmar Rudner retired and am the only archaeologist in a staff of 15 professional officers spread over the whole of South Africa. The NMC archaeologist is responsible not only for the issuing of permits for archaeological sites and objects, but for palaeontology and shipwrecks as well"²³. With this drift away from the archaeological past in the official provision for heritage management the number of archaeological sites dating to the pre-colonial period selected for declaration as national monuments has declined. By 1962 the figure had dropped to 9% of total declarations, and in 1990/91 stood at just 2% (Deacon 1993).

It would be misleading to attach too much importance to these figures in themselves. In part the drop in numbers can be attributed to a general policy decision first mooted in the 1940s and later repeated many times in the correspondence of the HMC and NMC, whereby it was thought that the Act automatically protected all archaeological, palaeontological and rock art sites so that it was unnecessary to confer on them separate national monument status²⁴. However, what they point to is a larger and more significant phenomenon, with profound importance for the practice of archaeology. That is not simply a shift away from archaeology in the official provision for the past, but a reconceptualization of the notion of national heritage around an exclusive, narrowly conceived version of settler history at the expense of the precolonial past. I want to argue that in the early years of the Archaeological Survey - certainly through the decades of the 1930s and 1940s - there was space for a version of the precolonial past and quite specifically for the discipline of archaeology

²³. The profile of the National Monuments Council has been changed in recent years with the employment of a number of young archaeology graduates, notably John Gribble and Sarah Winter.

²⁴. See Deacon 1993. This interpretation of the Act was to cause some confusion over the years. A case in point is the site of Peers Cave in Fish Hoek near Cape Town. Deacon writes:

A notice board was erected there in January 1941 amid much fanfare and florid newspaper reports. The newspapers erroneously said the site had been declared a national monument. Successive members of the Fish Hoek Municipality and others (including Ray Inskip...) have written at regular intervals asking the NMC to upgrade the site because of its national monument status, and citing the newspaper articles in support. (1993: 79)

in that shared and official sense of the past which we call national heritage. Indeed, in certain respects archaeologists were at the forefront of shaping policy around the notion of national heritage in this period. This is exemplified in the relationship of patronage between Jan Smuts and the fledgeling discipline, and in a moment whose symbolic importance is worth reiterating: the chartering of an Air Force plane to fly South African delegates to the first meeting of the Pan-African Congress on Prehistory in Nairobi. Here was a group of local scientists, primarily concerned with the precolonial past, visiting an international forum under the manifest protection of their government. Central to the status of archaeology and its position within official interpretations of heritage was the research on early human origins and the important Australopithecine finds from the Highveld. In the more sympathetic intellectual milieu of the Smuts regime these were interpreted as advancing knowledge of human origins, and as contributions to science and the grand narrative of human progress.

This conception of national heritage was decisively transformed under successive apartheid regimes to bring it into line with a racist ideology which was not only dismissive of the pre-colonial past, but informed by biblical creationist narratives. One aspect of this project was a contraction in the sense of duration of historical time itself. Official histories became narrowly identified with 300 years of settler occupation²⁵. Inskeep cites a striking instance of this phenomenon in connection with Monica Wilson and Leonard Thompson's two-volume history of South Africa, the first part of which appeared in 1969. This was a path-breaking work in the context of South African historiography in that the first four chapters were devoted to a review of the archaeological evidence and, as Inskeep puts it, "to reviews of the distribution, social organization, industry, economy and inter-group relationships of the several Bantu-speaking groups, and the non-Bantu hunters and herders" (1970: 304). The passage that Inskeep cites comes from a review of this work on South African radio by the historian Professor D. W. Kruger. In referring to the first four chapters he reportedly said:

²⁵. In this connection see a paper by Ciraj Rassool and Leslie Witz, "The 1952 Jan Van Riebeeck Tercentenary Festival: Constructing and Contesting Public National History" (1992). They describe the elevation of Jan Van Riebeeck as an iconic figure in South Africa's national history, coinciding with the tercentenary of European settlement. They write: "Van Riebeeck remains the figure around which South Africa's history is made and contested" (2); and "In 1952, Jan Van Riebeeck became the lead actor of South Africa's public history stage" (26).

One might well ask whether the authors have not swung the pendulum too far in the direction of a period where there is little evidence for any action and even less of interaction between races. In regard to South Africa's remote past and particularly that part covering the period before the arrival of the white man, we have a situation similar to that in Britain before the coming of the Romans. Although the Bantu tribes, unlike the Britons, did not disappear from the scene, I consider that the space devoted to those people who left so few records, is disproportionate. Even scholars, excellent in their particular fields have found it difficult to write real history where the sources are lacking. The simple fact remains: No documents, no history, even when we interpret the expression "documents" in its widest sense. (1970: 304)

What is interesting about this passage besides its dismissal of the pre-colonial past, is its identification of this past with the opposition between unwritten versus written sources, orality versus literacy. "No documents, no history" is as precise a negation of the role of archaeology as one is likely to find. Inskeep comments on this passage from Kruger as follows: "What worries me about this review is not the criticism of my own contribution - it will be re-written many times in the decades ahead, by myself, and others, and each time a little more fully and a little more certainly - but the distressingly narrow approach to what constitutes history, and the permissibility of prehistory" (1970: 304).

This narrow conception of heritage was reflected in all aspects of official history, from school history textbooks and the provisions of the new heritage legislation, to the work of the NMC. The emphasis on architecture in the work of the latter - and on a particular form of architecture at that - has meant that the notion of national heritage, as well as the NMC itself, has been inextricably bound with that icon of colonial privilege and oppression, the white Cape Dutch gable. The hijacking of the notion of national heritage to serve the interests of Afrikaner nationalism has been profoundly alienating for the majority of South Africans. It has destroyed the currency of a notion of "national" heritage as such. In its extreme manifestations it has led to the kind of disowning of the pre-colonial past and of personal histories which Biko alludes to in the passage quoted above, and which Smith has explored in his 1983 paper, "The Hotnot syndrome". For the discipline of archaeology in South Africa, this process of re-definition has had the effect of ending its access to official versions of the past. More importantly, it has severed its connection to a popular consciousness of the past, and to the perception that archaeology has a role to play in the conceptualization and practice of heritage.

The resulting paradox - that the apartheid state could provide funding for archaeologists which is generous by the standards of the Third World, and allow them substantial latitude in the practice of their discipline, but at the same time could consciously and actively work to undermine the stature of the precolonial past in national life and historical consciousness - constitutes the unique conjuncture of South African archaeology. It is a dynamic which I would characterise as a work of containment, as a drawing off of the discipline's social power. Hidden in the universities and museums, divorced from popular consciousness, South African archaeology became under apartheid a discipline without a social base. It became "academic" in the worst and most confining sense of the word: locked away in the academies, without purchase on contemporary life, speaking to a closed circle of initiates. It is at this point that I return to the delicate line between opposition and complicity. For, in the last resort, if apartheid was successful in this work of containment, then it was with the collusion of archaeologists themselves who by and large have observed these tacitly imposed boundaries.

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III. The Failure of Theory.

In line with these comments about the relationship between archaeology and society I want to suggest that the real failure of archaeologists in South Africa has been their failure as commentators on contemporary society. They chose a route whereby the past, instead of being seen in a dynamic relationship to the present - posing a series of commentaries on, and challenges to contemporary society - became an escape, an opportunity to turn their backs on a perplexing, dismaying and deeply compromising set of present realities. The really striking feature of even a casual perusal of the *Archaeological Bulletin* is the almost complete absence of reference to contemporary events. Sharpeville, Soweto June 16 1976, the township revolts of the mid-1980s and the States of Emergency, the release of Mandela and the unbanning of political parties - those names and events etched in bold on South Africa's recent history - all pass the *Bulletin* by, and in so doing, the organized voice of South African archaeology. In private archaeologists may have had strong opinions on these and other events, but in their public utterances - when they spoke as archaeologists - they had no space for them. The blood, the guns, the angry crowds, the shaming cruelty of apartheid, find no place in the discourse of archaeology.

"Failure" is a strong word to use in this context, and I find that I need to explain myself. In fact, I describe this as a failure in two senses. The first is in the sense of an intellectual and moral failure, and here I have in mind something like Edward Said's discussion of the role of the intellectual (in *Representations of the Intellectual*, 1994). As Said describes it, the task of the true intellectual is to seek a tough, independent-minded, and critical engagement with contemporary realities. It is not to fear stepping outside of disciplinary boundaries, but rather to welcome the kind of transgressive mobility that this entails. He writes: "to be a thinking and concerned member of a society one is entitled to raise moral issues at the heart of even the most technical and professionalized activity as it involves one's country, its power, its mode of interacting with its citizens as well as other societies" (61). Above all, it is to act as both commentator and "witness" (xiv) to contemporary society - "Speaking Truth to Power", in Said's evocative formulation.

Said writes: "It is a spirit in opposition, rather than in accommodation, that grips me because the romance, the interest, the challenge of intellectual life is to be found in dissent against the status quo at a time when the struggle on behalf of under-represented and disadvantaged groups seems so unfairly weighted against them" (xv). He recalls a tradition of "energetic dissenters" (xv), from Gore Vidal and Noam Chomsky to Sartre and de Beauvoir.

This restless and critical intellectual purpose, this sense of risk and commitment, is what seems to me absent in the historiography of South African archaeology. There are the spectacular instances of failure like the Gaborone Conference of 1983, but more generally in the affairs and transactions of the Bulletin it is translated into a conservatism, a cautiousness, an edge of anxiety about being drawn away from the orderly vistas of an imagined past. Almost any editorial from the Bulletin will serve as an example, but there is one particular passage that I want to refer to, not because it is the most blatant, but because it seems to me to capture something of the complexity of this response. Perhaps inevitably it is drawn from an editorial written by Ray Inskip, an archaeologist of unusual integrity on the South African scene and one for whose work I have the highest personal regard. It was published in the November 1967 edition of the Bulletin, a year which will stand out as a red-letter date to historians of Cape Town.

Inskeep begins on a personal note: "In the seven years that your present Editor has been living in Cape Town, editing your Bulletin, we have seen some curious changes. We have seen the Red Tide sweep into False Bay and leave the beaches strewn with dead fish whose gills were choked with dinoflagellates..." (71). The passage continues as a comment on the ecological degradation of False Bay: "When we first arrived in 1960, crayfish tails were a delicacy both abundant (in season), and relatively inexpensive - now they are an important export commodity, and the few which seem to reach the local market have become something of a luxury; and one hears gloomy tales of the breeding grounds being "fished out" ... Ardent anglers, who dot the rocks like cormorants at weekends, seem all too often these days to have a lean time". But then he continues: "The trek fishermen who row their nets out to sea, and drag them in to sandy beaches, have lost much of their traditional territory in False Bay to Group Areas Acts, and now, it seems that the same Group Areas Acts will chase out the last of the fisherman from Kalk Bay, Fish Hoek and Simonstown. All very sad and confusing" (71).

This is one of the remarkably few direct comments on contemporary events in the Bulletin, in this case a reference to Group Areas legislation and the forced removals which were tearing apart whole communities in the greater Cape Town area in the late 1960s. But then, as though to escape from the present, with its taint of politics, he immediately continues: "We mention all of this as an excuse for referring to the halcyon days of the Later Stone Age when sea foods (and fresh-water fish) seem to have been as avidly sought after as today, but presumably with fewer hindrances".

What are we to make of this passage? Seen in one light it appears as a commendable attempt to work a commentary on contemporary events which clearly disturbed Inskeep, into the format of the Bulletin. One bears in mind the limitations within which Inskeep was working: the conservatism of an overwhelmingly white readership, and past editorial policy on the Bulletin, and its skittishness about the politics of apartheid. At the same time there was the very real possibility of government reprisals - one accepts as a fact a certain amount of self-censorship in public statements of this nature. And yet, seen in another light it is profoundly unsatisfying. There is something disingenuous, even dishonest, about the manner in which Inskeep dismisses the forced removals for a discussion of the Later Stone Age. And what are we to make of that final, defeated phrase with which Inskeep sums up his position: "All very sad and confusing"?

We might bring to this reading a further piece of information: One of the very few black archaeologists in South Africa (and at present the senior black archaeologist in the country²⁶) was personally affected by these events. Cedric Poggenpoel's family was amongst those forcibly removed from the seaside village of Kalk Bay (pers. comm.). At the time Poggenpoel was working with Inskeep. More than anything else this serves to underline the inadequacy of Inskeep's printed response. Encapsulated in a single example is the sense of drawing back from the politics of apartheid - if you like, the discipline's refusal to engage. For a writer as perceptive as Inskeep, and one so keenly aware of the social context of archaeology, it represents an astonishing failure. What Inskeep so strikingly misunderstands, I want to suggest, is the long-term import of events, not simply for civil society, but quite specifically for the discipline of archaeology. It is fair to say that the discipline was to live with the intellectual legacy of that verbal shrug in the years to come, at Gabarone and again at Southampton.

In the second place, then, I use the word "failure" in the sense of a strategic failure, one with implications for the long-term sense and viability of archaeology in a post-apartheid South Africa. For this turning away from the present has left the discipline without a rootedness in contemporary consciousness - with a whiff of irrelevance - in a period in which constituencies have emerged as key elements in the politics of transition. There is a second, more personal sense in which this has proved disabling. Old habits die hard, and the habit of detachment - this sense in which archaeologists in South Africa have felt themselves unqualified or unable to comment on contemporary developments - has left them slow to respond to the challenges and opportunities of a post-apartheid society. There has been a notable lack of debate in the discipline around the implications of political transformation. Attempts to raise these issues at a 1992 meeting of the Southern African Association of Archaeologists degenerated into low farce. One black graduate student was so offended by the turn that events took that she left the hall, after roundly condemning those present. Something which has always surprised me is the anathema in which political discussion is held in the discipline. Generations of students have been raised with an instinctual mistrust of social and political contexts external to the most narrowly construed notion of the discipline's interests. In the context of the social

²⁶. This is in terms of years of service and experience. In terms of qualifications, Dr Gabeba Abrahams is the senior black archaeologist in South Africa. See Carmel Schrire's *Digging Through Darkness* (1995) for an account of Cedric Poggenpoel's involvement with archaeology.

sciences in general, and in the charged political atmosphere of the 1980s, this was always the striking aspect of archaeology to someone like myself who kept a foot outside the discipline.

Yet, this failure to fulfil the kind of role which Said describes needs to be set in the broader context of developments in archaeological theory, and the relationship between Anglo-American archaeology and its colonialist offshoots. Although it may be tempting to pass-off this lack of political courage as an aberration of South African archaeology, one of the effects of apartheid, I want to suggest that to do so would be quite misleading. Mazel usefully documents the manner in which South African archaeologists switched allegiance to Americanist archaeology in the early 1970s, in that period in which archaeology at home was experiencing a rapid growth in employment opportunities. The influence of processual archaeology was seen in the new emphasis on environmental and ecological approaches beginning in the late 1960s, and in the other trappings of processualism: hypothetico-deductivism, the emulation of the hard sciences, the search for objectivity. More generally it led to a narrowing of focus, and a new concentration on questions interior to the discipline at the cost of questions of social context and meaning. In a section titled "Spreading the Word" in her retrospective essay on "The Maturing of Archaeology as a Profession in South Africa", Deacon (1993) writes of Inskeep that "he took every opportunity to encourage archaeologists to make their subject more interesting to the public". However, she continues:

Looking back on the 1960s now, I am surprised that we were not more successful or even committed, but it probably had a lot to do with the fact that although we were aware that popularizing archaeology was important and one accepted invitations to speak publicly, to design museum exhibits and to arrange excursions, it seemed more important to get on with the business of generating primary data and publishing the results.(80)

Deacon's comment might equally be taken as an assessment of the archaeology of the 1970s and 1980s. The effect of the New Archaeology on South African archaeology was to depoliticise the discipline - to rid its public utterances of overt political referents - in a period of political convulsion. Working within the paradigm of Americanist archaeology South African archaeologists were able to fulfil the brief of their positions - even to carry out "good" archaeology - without needing to examine the social context of their work. The immobilizing effects of this theoretical paradigm were such that they left archaeologists in South Africa without the conceptual links

and theoretical resources to reflect the struggles, concerns, and political crises of the present in their writing. They have produced histories which are abstract, profoundly dissociated from the present, presented as timeless narratives distilled from the earth. Ironically, in accepting the precepts of the New Archaeology, they have at the same time accepted the ghettoization of archaeology under apartheid, as a specialist pursuit addressed to fellow professionals²⁷.

I want to suggest that the South African experience profoundly problematises a model of archaeological practice which requires interpreters of the past to cut themselves adrift from the present, to float above its contexts and concerns. More generally it questions whether any reconstruction of the past can have meaning other than through its relation to the present - we proceed from the known to the unknown, and past realities take their meaning from present experience. I shall go on to consider one instance of the effect of the new theoretical paradigm on the nature of archaeology in South Africa. It concerns a moment in the early 1970s when the discipline acted to decisively shed its amateur constituency, such as it was, in the name of modernisation.

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Amateurs and Professionals.

My source is an extraordinary debate published in the *Bulletin*, volume 28 (1973), which developed out of a paper submitted by Jalmar and Lone Rudner, the pre-

²⁷. The comparison with the discipline of history in South Africa is instructive. Juanita Pastor notes that "Unlike archaeology, history had come under the social spotlight in the early to mid-eighties with the politicisation of scholars against the public school system and the development of an "education for liberation" philosophy at [a] grass-roots level" (this is in her MPhil. dissertation, *Archaeology, Museology and Education: a case-study at Vergelegen*, 1993: 19-20). This resulted in a more politicised history-writing method, the so-called "People's History", conceptualized within the broader framework of "People's Education". Pastor writes: "Unlike archaeology, the emergence of a "history from below" alerted professional academics to a possible challenging viewpoint; the University of [the] Witwatersrand, for example, responded by creating History Workshop conferences and some historians started to direct their research towards more popular needs and desires" (20).

eminent amateur archaeologists in South Africa²⁸. In what was a departure for the *Bulletin* it followed a format used by the North American journal *Current Anthropology* and pre-circulated the paper among likely commentators, publishing twenty of their responses along with the original paper. The debate lined up against one another professional practitioners, and what was at that stage an active and vocal amateur constituency. Although archaeology in South Africa had never succeeded in developing its appeal outside a tightly-defined white and mainly Anglophile constituency, as I have described, it had attracted a motivated and committed band of followers from within that group. Historically, they had played an important role in the development of archaeology in South Africa. Leading practitioners like Van Riet Lowe had begun as amateur archaeologists. Amateurs had been instrumental in the founding of the *Bulletin*, and their subscriptions continued to be an important source of revenue. Deacon (1990) notes that up until 1960 amateurs were the authors of about 50 per cent of the papers published in the *Bulletin* (by the 1970s this had fallen to around 10 per cent). She writes: "The impression one gets of the organization of archaeology in southern Africa prior to 1960 is that the heart of the subject was seen by both professionals and amateurs alike to rest with the amateurs, or at least with people not employed full-time nor formally educated as archaeologists" (50-51).

This was in the process of changing at the time of which I am writing. Two events lie behind the 1973 debate and provide its context. The first was a meeting held in the Austrian town of Burg Wartenstein in 1965 with the aim of introducing a greater clarity in local terminology and definitions. Many old cultural and industrial terms were replaced by new, more technical ones (Deacon, 1990). The second was an amendment to the law governing heritage management in South Africa, entered in the statutes as the National Monuments Act No. 28 of 1969. This placed a prohibition on all collecting of archaeological and palaeontological material - including surface collecting, which had long been a staple of amateur archaeological activity - unless covered by a permit from the National Monuments Council. The NMC were reportedly reluctant to issue permits to non-professionals. Together these had the effect of greatly restricting the scope of amateur archaeological activity.

The title of the Rudners' paper is "End of an Era". It takes the form of a polemic against recent developments in South African archaeology. They begin: "The role of

²⁸. Jalmar Rudner had been an Honorary Curator of archaeology at the South African Museum in Cape Town. The husband and wife pair were frequent contributors to the *Bulletin*.

the amateur archaeologist in South Africa is coming to an end and the professional archaeologist is taking over. But need this be?" (13). They recall the role played by amateurs in the development of archaeology, and note that when Goodwin founded the Archaeological Society in 1945 its aim was "to help the amateur and to co-operate with Members and Institutions in research and the protection of archaeological materials and records" (Goodwin quoted in Rudner 1973: 13). They note the symbolic importance of Inskeep's arrival:

Goodwin died in 1959 and his post was taken over in 1960 by R.R. Inskeep. Since then a new generation of professional archaeologists has been trained who have taken over newly created posts all over the country. 1960 can be said to mark the beginning of the new era in South African archaeology. (13)

The Rudners have two complaints. The first lies with "the increasingly technical character of the papers in the *Bulletin*" (14). The increasing number of professional archaeologists submitting papers had resulted in a pressure of publishing which had squeezed out non-specialist contributions. The second concerns the new law prohibiting surface collecting without a permit. This was particularly irksome to the Rudners in view of their own research project, begun in 1950, which revolved around collecting and recording surface cultural material from shell middens and sand-dune sites along the Cape and Namibian coasts. Like the existing heritage legislation the problem with the new law was that it was unlikely to be rigorously enforced. The Rudners quite correctly note that: "In practice this means that while the conscientious person who knows something about archaeology would record and report the find while leaving it *in situ*, the child or any other person who sees it and realizes that it is not a natural object will pick it up to take home, sooner or later to lose it" (14). They write:

We see in the present situation a danger that the amateur archaeologist in South Africa will lose interest as he is almost entirely restricted in his hobby.... It will be to the advantage of the professional archaeologist to encourage and co-operate with the amateur, rather than to isolate him from the archaeological scene. There is scope and work for all in this vast country. (14)

A number of amateur archaeologists write in support of the Rudners, including G.C. Hoehn of Cape Town, M.R. Izzett of Salisbury (now Harare), and D.R. Hamann (Newlands) who writes that the Rudners' "contention that the *Bulletin* has now become too technical will be supported by the majority of non-professional members of the Society" (17). T.C. Partridge writes from Braamfontein that "The new National

Monuments Act fails to recognize the fundamental contributions made to South African archaeology by amateurs, and provides no incentive for their continued participation in the quest to illuminate our complex prehistory" (21). A. Viereck (Windhoek) writes: "With one stroke of the pen this law deletes the amateur from the field of investigation in prehistory" (22). Duncan Miller writes from Newlands: "The Rudners' article is most welcome. It produces suggestions for the "revival" and increase of co-operation between the professional and amateur archaeologist" (20).

On the other side T. M. Evers and R. Mason come down heavily on the side of professional archaeologists, and the idea of professionalism. For them the issue of professionalism is about protecting scientific standards in archaeology. Evers writes:

Ultimately ... the bulk of archaeological research should devolve on the professional who can record material and present it at a standard comparable to the admirable scientific standards set overseas. Archaeology is becoming increasingly more precise and involves a great deal more science than in the pre-1960 years. It is only the professional who really has the time to keep up with these developments sufficiently to maintain a high standard of scientific archaeological research in this country. (16)

Mason writes in support of the new legislation although he sees "the need for a much wider enforcement of the Act" (19). He writes: "South Africa cannot afford to become known as an isolated end of a continent where declining standards in science and education are accepted" (20). And then, more antagonistically: "No amateur archaeologist has any right whatever to divert money or any other resources from the professional archaeologist" (20).

Oliver Davies and Roger Summers give more thoughtful responses to the Rudners' paper. Although himself an eminent professional archaeologist, Davies is carefully agnostic. He writes: "I would be the first to deplore the relegation of the amateur archaeologist. In fact all archaeologists of my generation would be regarded by the present brood as amateurs" (15). Summers writes: "I cannot help feeling sympathy for Jalmar and Ione Rudner.... The artificial division between "amateurs" and "professionals", between "academics" and "non-academics" *must* go. The only sort of archaeologist I recognize is one who works, thinks and is self-critical" (22). K. R. Robinson, C.K. Cooke, R.W. Dickinson and M.R. Izzett all report a greater co-operation between professional and amateur archaeologists in the then Rhodesia.

The interest of this debate lies in several directions. In the first place it is interesting as a moment in the professionalisation of the discipline. It represents the bringing to maturity of Inskip's project of establishing the discipline on a professional footing locally. Both Evers and Mason show an awareness of the colonialist status of local archaeology. In terms of Mason's geographical imagery South Africa is "an isolated end of a continent". Evers writes wistfully of the admirable scientific standards "overseas". However, the chief interest of the debate lies in the manner in which the language of science and technical proficiency is used to justify a narrower conception of archaeology's social accountability. This was the moment at which the discipline decided for a particular model of scientific practice, and against the notion of an amateur constituency to which it was in some senses answerable.

The cleavage which this produced was between amateur and professional archaeologists, but it was also between an older generation of professional archaeologists trained in a humanist tradition, and a generation of modernisers of whom Inskip was the first. There is a final passage that I want to refer to in this connection. It comes from B.D. Malan's 1970 paper ("Remarks and reminiscences on the history of archaeology in South Africa"). In a lengthy penultimate paragraph Malan writes:

And so we come to the present. Just as we hear so much nowadays of New Maths and New Biology, there is a New Archaeology. This can be said to have been born at Burg Wartenstein in July and August 1965. At that conference a reassessment was made. It was generally conceded that much of the accepted edifice of African archaeology rested on hopelessly insecure foundations and that many of the accepted concepts had not been properly defined. Recommendations to correct these shortcomings were made and a number of important resolutions were taken which, if they are carried out, will revolutionize the subject. It is quite evident that we are entering an entirely new era in prehistoric studies. This is to be welcomed, but I should like to make an urgent appeal. It was said the other evening that someone we were discussing, a leading amateur, actively engaged in research and publication, had little understanding of the new ideas. It is absolutely essential that the top-level experts of Burg Wartenstein descend from the rarefied atmosphere of the lovely Austrian mountains to the mundane sea-level of Cape Town and explain their objectives and decisions in words of one syllable to us ordinary mortals. It may be that they can, and perhaps even should do without the collaboration of the interested layman. But I am sure that they cannot do without our interest and support. (92)

This passage is interesting for a number of reasons. It confirms the Rudners' sense that one era was ending and another beginning for South African archaeology. It also confirms the importance of the Burg Wartenstein meeting. It points to the division between professional and amateur archaeologists in South Africa. Most striking, however, is the final line. Malan writes of professional archaeologists that "they cannot do without our interest and support", where this "our" refers to "the interested layman". Malan had been a student of Goodwin's in the 1930s, and had been a director of the Archaeological Survey following the retirement of Van Riet Lowe (and later of the NMC). At the time of writing he would have been the most senior professional archaeologist in the country. His instinctual identification with the interests of amateur archaeologists underlines the extent of the generational divide produced by the new theoretical paradigm. The future of archaeology lay with the "top-level experts", rather than the "ordinary mortals" among whom Malan numbers himself.

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IV. Colonialist Archaeology in Crisis.

This brings me to my final point, which is that archaeology in South Africa has experienced the demise of apartheid as a moment of crisis. This is hugely ironic given the standard justifications offered by archaeologists in this country for their work, and in itself should direct us to question received notions of the relationship between archaeology and apartheid. This crisis would appear to be one of an organic nature, rather like that Marxian moment when the underlying contradictions in the system ineluctably assert themselves. Above all, it is the moment when archaeology, neglectful of its social base, having wilfully abdicated its right to comment on contemporary society, is made to seem increasingly irrelevant in post-apartheid society.

The signs of this crisis are visible, in the first place in the declining numbers of students registering for undergraduate courses in archaeology at the major teaching centres. At the University of the Witwatersrand a marked drop in the number of students in the first year archaeology course is reported (Sven Ouzman pers. comm.). At the University of Cape Town the numbers are down on a few years ago

despite a concerted attempt to attract more first year registrations²⁹. Added to this is the continuing failure of the discipline to attract significant numbers of black students. In 1993 as part of the census of practitioners I looked at the proportion of black and women students in four departments at the University of Cape Town: Archaeology, Social Anthropology, Religious Studies and Sociology, for the period 1991-3. These departments were chosen as a basis for comparison because none of them result in a credit towards a teacher's diploma, which was thought to be a significant motivator of student choice³⁰. The results of this race and gender profile are both revealing and disquieting.

Archaeology has marginally the lowest proportion of women students from among the four departments surveyed, although its figures compare favourably with the student body as a whole. For the years 1991-3 its figures are a remarkably even 50%, taken across total student enrollments in years one to six. The figures for Religious Studies range between 54-59% women students. Sociology stands at around 58%, and Social Anthropology has the highest proportion of women students at between 60-64%. However, the real discrepancies emerge in the survey by race. The percentage of total black student enrollments in archaeology in the years 1991-3 are 22%, 29% and 28% (of these 4%, 5% and 12% of the total are African). In Religious Studies the figures are 49%, 50% and 51% (20%, 19% and 23% African). In Sociology the figures are 48% and 53%, with 26% and 30% of the total being African students (the data for 1993 was incomplete at the time of survey). Finally, for Social Anthropology the figures are 49%, 56% and 58% (28%, 35% and 35% African). From these results it would appear that the Department of Archaeology has roughly half the proportion of black students of the other surveyed departments. In particular, the Department of Social Anthropology - a discipline with a similar colonial past - has more than double the proportion of black students, and between three and seven times the proportion of specifically African students. The results suggest that archaeology is not only potentially the "whitest" department in the social sciences, but in the entire university³¹.

²⁹. In 1996 Martin Hall and I co-lectured a revamped first-year, first semester course. While greatly improving the content and format of the course, it failed to attract the expected number of students.

³⁰. On these grounds the department of history, for example, was not surveyed, although it makes an obvious choice in terms of overlapping interests and professional concerns.

³¹. Once again, Trigger provides some points of contact with colonialist archaeology in North America. In "Prehistoric Archaeology and American Society" (1986) he

A second indicator of the crisis of archaeology in South Africa is the drying-up of public funds for archaeology. Museum and university posts are routinely frozen when they fall vacant, and there is talk of closing departments of archaeology in the name of rationalization. A recent trend has seen a number of senior practitioners attempting to move sideways into administrative posts, or out of the discipline altogether. At the other end of the discipline the crisis is visible in the exceedingly small number of graduates who go on to secure jobs in archaeology. The discipline would seem to have the profligate habit of watching its brightest and best move off into other fields. Equally significant is the fall-off in the numbers of new applications for funding for archaeological research projects received by the Council for Scientific Development, a major source of funding for such projects (reported by Martin Hall, pers. comm February 1997). This indicates that the number of major new archaeological research projects being undertaken in South Africa is itself declining. The days in which the Deacons were uncovering the archaeology of the Southern Cape, while Parkington explored the West Coast and Lewis-Williams was mapping the rock art of the interior, belong to a different era. Hall's word for the present state of the discipline in South Africa is that it appears to be "moribund"³².

More profoundly, the crisis of South African archaeology is manifested as a lack of vision, a lack of ideas with regard to the future of the discipline. Most of the senior practitioners got their start in the period of rapid disciplinary growth in the late 1960s and early 1970s. In the years since then South African archaeology has largely failed to incorporate significant numbers of new personnel at senior levels. The result, as these people near the end of their careers, has been a certain conservatism, and

writes that: "On the whole American archaeologists were a conservative lot. They remained predominantly male and of Anglo-Saxon origin; which was very different from ethnology, where women and ethnic minorities played a much more significant role" (191). He also notes that prehistoric archaeologists had less contact with native people.

³². Also see Hall's comments in "The transformations and ?future of South African archaeology" (*WAC News* 5(1): 5-6, 1997). He writes: "at the very time they should be expanding their horizons, museums are facing unprecedented budget cuts... Fewer students than ever before are choosing courses in archaeology at South African universities, and fewer still are electing to major in the subject... Fewer archaeologists than ever before are applying for research grants from government agencies" (6). Finally, he writes: "Despite vigorous campaigns and bursary schemes, we are finding it difficult to attract black students to the discipline... To any outsider, archaeology in the "New South Africa" must seem very white" (6).

even stagnation. Certainly, it is not a situation which is conducive to a bold assertion of the challenges and a striking-out in new directions. In a paradoxical fashion archaeology prospered under the repressive regime of apartheid, largely because it shielded practitioners from the social consequences of their own actions. With so many basic human rights denied under apartheid, rights over historical interpretation and the control of cultural property hardly figured as a prominent grievance. However, in the 1990s there are signs of an increasing assertion of such rights, and calls for the accountability of archaeologists, and archaeologists as a group would seem to hold few answers.

Finally, on the school education front there are signs that few of the proposed reforms hold good news for the discipline of archaeology. I return to this topic in Chapter Five ("Archaeology and Education"), and in Chapter Six, the final chapter. In this final chapter I suggest that the crisis of colonial archaeology in South Africa will be resolved in one of two directions: a post-colonial archaeology, or what I label a neo-colonial archaeology - that is, a choice between an optimistic future and a more pessimistic one. But first I need to consider a theme which has run like a ground-swell through this discussion, and which cannot be put off any longer: the question of archaeology and social value.

CHAPTER 4

THE SOCIAL VALUE OF ARCHAEOLOGY

As I write, the idea of the past, and its role and value in the present is much in the news. A single edition of the *Mail and Guardian* (vol 12, no 6, April 19 to 25 1996) carries two stories which give central place to questions of the place and nature of the past in our lives. The first is a response to Cape Town artist Pippa Skotnes' exhibition at the South African National Gallery, *Miscast: Negotiating Khoisan History and Material Culture*. Skotnes' concerns lie in exploring the genocide enacted against Khoisan groups by Dutch, and later British, settlers and officials. As her title implies, a feature of this concern lies with the manner in which the Khoisan have been represented in settler historiography, and in popular (settler) consciousness. But Skotnes' major interest appears to be in the peculiar conjunction between racism, colonialism, and the interests and practices of nineteenth century science. In a hall which is atmospherically darkened to indicate the hushed presence of the past, Skotnes has placed on display body casts taken from live subjects, scientific instruments of measurement and dissection, artefacts of Khoisan material culture, and a huge collection of black and white photographs. This latter includes portraiture, anthropometric images, images of starvation and execution, and images of two of the many preserved Khoisan heads held in collections in Europe (a number of them in the British Natural History Museum). One of the display cases reminds us that Bushmen were measured, cast, dissected, and occasionally stuffed and mounted.

A further framing narrative for Skotnes' approach to the topic is provided by the stories of Lucy Lloyd, Wilhelm Bleek, and the Bushman informants whose testimonies they collected in the late nineteenth century and which now provide the primary textual source for Bushman studies (good science, as opposed to the bad science of the dissecting instruments?). One senses a personal identification between the artist and the figure of Lucy Lloyd. In two further rooms are mounted Paul Weinberg's exhibition of contemporary images of Khoisan groups, and an audio-visual display on Bushman rock art.

Rehana Roussouw's article in the *Mail and Guardian* ("Setting history straight - or another chance to gape?") focuses on the public forum to discuss the exhibition held on the Sunday following its opening, to which eleven Khoisan groups were invited ("This century's most representative gathering of Khoisan groups..."). It reports the

attack on Skotnes by some of the groups, including the !Hurikamma Cultural Movement whose representatives said that they were "sick and tired of naked brown people being exposed to the curious glances of rich whites in search of dinner-table conversation... The exhibition does nothing to oppose forces which tried and are still trying to conquer the Khoisan. Instead, it is yet another symbol of our status as a conquered people" (9). The Griqua National Conference of South Africa were similarly critical of what they call Skotnes' "dehumanised portrayal" of the Khoisan. In 1995 the Griqua organization reportedly sent a memorandum to President Mandela demanding recognition of their status as aboriginals, representation at all levels of government, restitution of violated treaties, the return of Griqua land, and compensation for the genocide of indigenous people in South Africa. They received a response from Mandela's office saying their memorandum was being "looked into".

However, other groups were positive and complimentary. The Khoisan Representative Council (KRC) which speaks on behalf of the Namas, Korannas, !Xu, Kwe and other San groups in the Northern Province believes the exhibition will play an important role in the awakening of Khoisan nationalism. KRC representative, Martin Engelbrecht, speaks of the Khoisan people having suffered a "mental genocide" with the destruction of their history, traditions, culture and religion by European settlers:

Whites taught us to regard ourselves as inferior, to deny our Khoisan legacy, but we are claiming it back again. Because it will be impossible for the government to restore to all Khoisan people what they have lost, we believe the best way to resettle Khoisan descendants is to do so mentally - to restore to them a pride in their past. (9)

The second article which forcibly confronts us with the ideas of memory, history, and the role of the past in the present is an account by David Beresford of the opening meeting of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission on 15 April 1996 in the East London city hall ("Theatre of Pain and Catharsis"). Beresford opens his account by describing the theatricality and drama of the setting: "The huge burgundy curtains on the stage... provided a fitting backdrop for the 17 truth commissioners when they set about uncovering the horrors of the apartheid era" (5). He writes of how Archbishop Tutu climbed on stage to light a candle of remembrance, and of the banner strung across the stage behind the commissioners which read "Truth and Reconciliation Commission - Healing our Past". Archbishop Tutu opened proceedings by delivering

a short homily in which he chose an archaeological metaphor to express his meaning:

We are charged to unearth the truth about our dark past; to lay to rest the ghosts of that past so that they may not return to haunt us. That it may thereby contribute to the healing of a traumatised and wounded nation; for all of us in South Africa are wounded people. (5)

These ghosts were then paraded before the commission, some of them familiar, others less known. There was the story of the death in police detention of Mapetla Mohapi, a close friend of Steve Biko, told by his widow Nohle Mohapi. When she was taken to the mortuary to identify his body she was taunted by a black policeman: "They call themselves leaders and they kill themselves!" The widows of the "Pepco 3" told of the mysterious phone call that summoned their husbands to the airport to meet a non-existent British consular official, never to be seen again. The lawyers leading the evidence had been instructed by the commission to let the witnesses talk in the hope that it would bring them a personal catharsis:

And the catharsis was there, as the women let loose their pain with accounts of the years of struggle raising children without fathers, suffering detention and beatings themselves and endlessly searching for the truth of what had happened to their loved ones and a chance to bury them. (5)

Beresford struggles to identify the nature of the proceedings: "Judicial commission? Church service? Theatre? Group therapy? Funeral?". In the end he decides that the Truth and Reconciliation commission is none of these things, but rather, in the hopeful words of one of the witnesses "the start of a new beginning"¹.

In these two articles the past figures as an act of memory (in Skotnes' exhibition, and the hearings of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission), and as a point of identity (in the response of the various Khoisan groups). The intention, on the one hand, is to

¹ The Truth and Reconciliation Commission hearings have since been widely covered in the South African media. To my mind some of the best - and most moving - writing to have emerged from this process is by the Afrikaans poet and journalist Antjie Krog. In particular, see a series of articles published in the *Mail and Guardian*: "Pockets of humanity (May 24 to 30, 1996); "Truth trickle becomes a flood" (November 1 to 7, 1996. This covers the first week of submissions by perpetrators); "Overwhelming trauma of the truth" (December 24 1996 to January 9 1997); and "The parable of the bicycle" (February 7 to 13, 1997).

place before us the evidence of a suppressed and shameful past, either as a challenge to the present, or that we might thereby gain some relief (in Tutu's terms, to "lay the ghosts" of the "dark" past). On the other hand the intention is to use the past as a point of cohesion, and as the basis for a political identification. In the statements of the Khoisan representatives we sense a real struggle for restitution and representation - and not least, for a constituency, for the right to speak and be heard. Either way, the idea of the past which they embody is less about traditional or common-sense conceptions of the past - as something we leave behind us, as a matter of academic curiosity - than it is about a living, moving force in the present.

The question of the role of the past in the present is one of the questions (and as I would see it, the central question) in a larger enquiry which is the subject of this chapter: the question of the social value of archaeology. What can archaeology say to the present? More particularly, what can archaeology say to a post-colonial present? Of what value is archaeology to a society in a period of recoil from the horrors of the past?

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Archaeology and Social Value - Review.

There is remarkably little discussion in the corpus of archaeological theory on the social value of the archaeological past. The questions: Why? To what ends? and, For whom? are not ones that the discipline has traditionally asked itself. On the one hand this reflects a general anti-theoreticism in the discipline - the opposition to posing the kinds of questions which draw practitioners out of problems internal to the discipline, and into broader social contexts. On the other hand archaeologists have taken a kind of wilful pride in the obverse nature of their calling, even associating glamour with the idea of its obscurity. Trigger (1989: 3) records a marvellous comment by Ernest Hooten (1938) who described archaeologists as "the senile playboys of science rooting in the rubbish heaps of antiquity"².

Where archaeologists have taken up the question of social value it has made for some of the most lastingly interesting writing in the discipline. More than any other

². In *Apes, Men and Morons* (1938: 218), London: Allen and Unwin.

aspect of archaeological commentary it gives us a direct line to the social contexts of the discipline as its practitioners saw them, and to the questions and issues which they thought their work could usefully address. Not surprisingly, each school of archaeological thought has answered the question of social value in its own way. My intention in this part of the chapter is to briefly review some of their work.

The Idea of Progress in Culture-Historical Archaeology.

First published in 1936, Gordon Childe's *Man Makes Himself* was written against the background of global economic crisis and the rise of fascism in Europe. It was the first of three works from this period, including *What Happened in History?* (1942), and *Progress in Archaeology* (1944), whose purpose was to reaffirm a faith in the idea of progress. Childe begins:

Last century "progress" was accepted as a fact. Trade was expanding, the productivity of industry was increasing, wealth was accumulating. Scientific discoveries promised a boundless advance in man's control over Nature, and consequently unlimited possibilities of further production. Growing prosperity and deepening knowledge inspired an atmosphere of unprecedented optimism in the Western world. Now that optimism has received a rude shock. The World War and subsequent crises, producing even in the midst of horrible poverty an apparent surplus of goods, have undermined its economic foundations. Doubts as to the reality of "progress" are widely entertained. (1939 [1936]: 1)

"To settle their doubts", Childe continues, "men should turn to history". His study takes the form of a review of human history in which he sets out to demonstrate his central thesis: that the survival of human beings has been due to their adaptability (it is in this sense that Childe describes them as self-creating). The social value of archaeology in Childe's conception is in functioning as an antidote to the sombre intellectual climate of the times, something it is able to do because of its particular perspective on the past. Childe writes:

The business of the historian would be to bring out the essential and significant in the long and complex series of events with which he is confronted. But to distinguish and unpick the thread of progress, if such there be, running through history requires a view of history very different from that set out in the formal text-books in my school-days. In the first place, a long and wide view is essential. When short periods or confined regions alone are

surveyed, the multiplicity of separate events is likely to obscure any underlying pattern. (1939: 4)

Archaeology's value lies in being able to descry the patterns in the human past. It functions as a reminder of the fundamental currents of human history. Ultimately, for Childe, these deep currents are inspirational. *Man Makes Himself* ends as a powerful statement of affirmation for the potential of human nature: "And so , we can repeat with deeper insight, Man makes himself" (270).

In *Gordon Childe; Revolutions in Archaeology* (1980) Bruce Trigger sets this work in the context of the growing power of fascism, and Childe's own materialism. He writes:

Childe's desire to find out if there was any hope for the future... led him to explore theories of cultural evolution, which had remained important in Marxist thinking, but in which he had so far taken only a marginal interest. (104)

Of *Man Makes Himself* and *What Happens in History* (which he describes as Childe's two best known books) he writes:

They were significant discussions of the relevance of archaeology for understanding broader problems of human history. Their stated purpose was to encourage renewed faith in cultural progress among readers who had largely abandoned such a belief in favour of biological, and even supernatural explanations of history and human behaviour. (104)

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Archaeology as Utilitarian Science.

The New Archaeology settled the question of social value by redefining the discipline. Henceforth the goal of archaeological research was to produce universal generalizations about human behaviour, which could be used both in the interpretation of the past and the management of contemporary society. My source for this discussion is a volume by Patty Jo Watson, Steven A. LeBlanc and Charles L. Redman called *Archaeological Explanation; The Scientific Method in Archaeology* (1984). It is a typical work of the New Archaeology, and includes chapters on "Archaeology as Science", "Systems Theory and Archaeology", "Ecology and

Archaeology", and so on. However, in the final chapter ("Archaeology and Society: Problems and Prospects") the authors set out to "consider a series of topics arising from the relationship of archaeology to modern society in the United States" (233).

In a section headed "Archaeology as Social Science" they write: "Social sciences are not logically different from other sciences" (248). Just as the "hallmark of the physical sciences is the enjoyment of controlled experiments", so the social sciences use controlled observation and experimentation to study human behaviour. They write, in this context:

Archaeologists as anthropologists and social scientists explain how the archaeological record was emplaced, and also they use archaeological data to derive and test generalizations and to construct theories about cultural processes that are represented in the archaeological record. (249)

In a subsequent section ("The Aims of Prehistory") they broaden the terms of this brief:

One major objective of archaeological research should be the formulation and testing of theories and laws possibly explanatory of the human past and human behaviour in general. (266)

They contrast the "historicist and particularist" paradigm in Americanist archaeology in the 1930s-50s to this "generalist, new or processual, or scientific archaeology" (266). In fact, they suggest that hidden beneath the particularist approach is a greater reliance on generalization than it cares to admit: "Without reference to generalizations about human behaviour, not even the most doctrinaire of particularists could compose a narrative or history about an individual human being or a human group" (266). And, conversely:

the main practical justification for constructing and testing theories is to find confirmed lawlike generalizations for use in understanding, explaining, and predicting human behaviour and cultural processes. (266-7)³

³. Also see Binford's essay titled "Archaeological Perspectives", in *New Perspectives in Archaeology* (1968). He writes: "In our search for explanations of differences and similarities in the archaeological record, our ultimate goal is the formulation of laws of cultural dynamics" (27).

Trigger takes up this discussion in a section headed "Anti-historicism" in the chapter on "Neo-evolutionism and the New Archaeology" in *A History of Archaeological thought* (1989). He notes that although the New Archaeology is often described as primarily a technical and methodological revolution in archaeology, it "was no less a break with the past in terms of high-level theory" (312). In particular, this is visible in its reformulation of disciplinary aims, and in the new social role which it saw for itself. He writes:

The New Archaeology followed the lead of the generalizing social sciences, such as economics, political science, sociology, and ethnology by claiming to be able to produce objective, ethically neutral generalizations that were useful for the management of modern societies... It was argued that archaeology could provide information about the nature of long-term interactions between human groups and the environment that would be of value for modern economic planning... (313)

Trigger notes that: "This desire to conform to a more prestigious model of scholarly behaviour was reinforced as the National Science Foundation emerged as a major funder for archaeological research" (313). More generally it reflected the social and intellectual milieu of post-war American society. He writes:

At the most basic level the nomothetic orientation of the New Archaeology appealed to the tendencies of these [middle class] Americans to value what was technologically useful at the same time that they remained suspicious of pure science because of what they saw as its elitist tendencies... (313)

He writes of a "contempt for what was not practical", and of "the "present-mindedness" of American society". This utilitarian spirit was also manifested as a prevailing anti-historicism. Trigger writes:

To produce "relevant" findings that would justify an honoured place for archaeology in a society in which "technocratic efficiency is considered as the supreme value" [this is from Kolakowski 1976: 229]... many American archaeologists saw themselves having to turn away from a historical understanding of the past to create the generalizations about human behaviour that were the hall mark of successful social sciences. (314)⁴

⁴. The Kolakowski reference is a work called *La Philosophie positiviste* (Paris: Denoel).

He suggests that it is within this context that we must understand Binford's claim that historical interpretation is unsuited to play more than a "role in the general education of the public"⁵.

Finally, an aspect of the New Archaeology's reformulation of disciplinary aims was its resolutely apolitical stance. Trigger notes that: "Such research was endowed with further scientific credentials by positivist claims of ethical neutrality" (314).

Archaeologists working within this paradigm were no longer willing to venture the kind of social and political commentary found, for example, in the writing of Childe.

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Archaeology as Critical Practice.

In an aptly titled paper, "Archaeology in 1984" (1984), Hodder reflects on the social value of the discipline as he sees it. He notes that:

In the West scientific archaeology has, if anything, had the danger of removing archaeology from any ability to make a relevant contribution to the modern world, both because of the neutral, apolitical aura which it has claimed as a science, and because of the scientific terminology and specialization with which it has surrounded itself. (28)

He describes the epistemological "dilemma" of scientific archaeology: on the one hand "a widespread desire for science and objective tests, a fear of speculation and the subjective", and on the other hand the desire to say something interesting about the past. "However", writes Hodder, "the dilemma only occurs if archaeology is seen as a science... If archaeology is seen properly as a cultural and social product the "problem" dissolves" (28). The way out is to recognize archaeology's nature as a social practice - that is, as a discipline whose "data of the past are observed and have meaning within a present social and political context" (28). This raises a set of questions of its own, in particular: "what type of past do people want, should archaeologists provide a past that supports (legitimizes) or disturbs present outlooks, which sections of society do archaeologists write for, and what are the implications of Western archaeologists working in developing countries?" (28). One result of this

⁵. This is in a "Comment" in *Current Anthropology* 8: 235 (1967).

conception of archaeology is a new openness to the claims of "alternative social groups":

...different pasts will be constructed within different but limited sets of social interests. There are signs that groups other than white, Anglo-Saxon , protestant, male, middle class intellectuals want to write their own pasts. Other social groups in England, women in England and America, ethnic minorities and archaeologists in less-developed countries are beginning to make claims to their own archaeology. (30-31)

Finally, for Hodder, the social value of the archaeological past lies in its potential "as an arena for the playing out of different social values and interests" (31). However this free play of competing interests is not entirely unfettered. In the last resort it is pulled short by the hard reality of the archaeological data: "We are all theoreticians but we also deal in data. This is not to claim that the data are independent of theory, but to state that our theories must be better moulded to the historically specific data" (30).

Shanks and Tilley develop this notion of archaeology as social practice in the final chapter of *Social Theory and Archaeology* (1987). Like Hodder, they firmly situate archaeology as a practice in relation to a contested present ("Archaeology is to be situated in the present as discourse in a political field, and as a practice located in relation to structures of power", 187). They are sharply critical of traditional approaches in archaeology: "The study of the past as an end in itself seems to amount to an antiquarian desire to escape from the burden of living in the present, perhaps for personal self-gratification; it may also amount to a nostalgic yearning for values, social structures and social relations that are, and can be, no more" (196). Following Hayden White they describe this as a model of archaeologist as "cultural necrophile".

Like Hodder they show a willingness to countenance a multiplicity of pasts, which is refreshing after the dour orthodoxy of the New Archaeology: "There is not, and cannot be, one correct archaeological view of the past, one indivisible archaeology. There are instead many archaeologies, and frameworks for understanding them must become sites of struggle" (200). Their conception of archaeology is as one amongst a number of cultural practices in late-capitalist society. They write: "In terms of society as a whole archaeology obviously has very little economic or political significance, but it does constitute a cultural practice, integrated in the general

hegemonic regime of power in society. As such, archaeology is nothing if it is not cultural critique" (198). In a phrase which seems like a conscious echo of Hodder they describe the study of the past as "a means of providing a medium for a critical challenge to the present" (196). This emphasis "on the location of the truth of the past in the contemporary cultural practice of archaeology... does not open the way for an anarchic play with meaning, a profusion of archaeologies each rooted in their own politics". They write: "Hodder is right to stress the material resistance of the past: not just anything can be said about it" (199).

In a key concluding section called "Intellectual labour and the socio-political role of the archaeologist" they set out their notion of a socially and politically engaged archaeology. They begin by addressing a topic which Said has developed at length: the role of the intellectual. In the Marxist tradition the intellectual has been "a bearer of universal truths, acting in the role of the political consciousness of the masses" (20). In Sartre's provocative definition, the intellectual is "*someone who attends to what concerns him... and to whom others refer as a man who interferes in what does not concern him*" (20). In this conception the role of the intellectual is an oppositional one, questioning and subverting the established socio-political order from the relatively privileged perspective that his or her position provides. Foucault moves beyond the notion of intellectual-as-witness by asserting that intellectual knowledge is itself inserted into systems of power. Consequently, the intellectual's role is

no longer to place himself "somewhat ahead and to the side" in order to express the stifled truth of the collectivity; rather, it is struggle against the forms of power that transform him into its object and instrument in the sphere of "knowledge", "truth", "consciousness", and "discourse". (Foucault 1977: 208, in Shanks and Tilley 1987: 202)⁶

The role of the intellectual becomes a specific one, struggling against prevailing power-knowledge-truth strategies on the particular ground of her or his own discipline.

Shanks and Tilley discuss their own conception of intellectual commitment in terms of a "value-committed archaeology", which they arrive at by the following steps: The work of the archaeologist is always already political in nature ("There is no possibility

⁶. The Foucault reference is an essay called "Intellectuals and Power", in a collection edited by D. Bouchard (*Language, Counter-Memory, Practice*, New York: Cornell Univ. Press).

of a neutral and autonomous "middle way", 205). Interpretation is an act in which "the archaeologist *actively decides* upon one past rather than another", thereby constructing a socio-political position whether they want to or not. All such representations of the past have "an expressive, rhetorical and persuasive purpose" (205). They are the form in which "millions of people make sense, or have sense made for them, of *their* past, and its connection with the present" (204). Not only can the archaeological past be used "for expressing a wide variety of supportive ideas and values for a capitalist society" (205), but the discipline reproduces these relations and forms of organization within its own structures.

The strategy of a value-committed archaeology would therefore have two prongs, the first of which would be the transformation of relations within the discipline itself ("Such an archaeology would require a reorientation of power structures within archaeological institutions"). In the second place it demands a kind of refusal, which takes the form of a critique of capitalist society ("Archaeology should be conceived as acting as a catalyst to the transformation of the present" 1987: 208). As to how exactly this might be done or what form it would take in practice, they have little to say beyond a few suggestive, though cryptic, formulations. A value-committed archaeology should be provocative ("A critical archaeology will produce texts which interrogate the past in the form of a social document forged in the present, stimulating a reply, a reaction, another text" 1987: 207); it would escape the limitations of textuality to include aesthetic and poetic elements; and it would ground itself in a general understanding which sees "... the study of material culture as being fundamentally a study of power, the mediation, representation and articulation of power strategies through material forms" (208). They conclude their discussion (and their book) with a sentence which I have chosen as an epigraph to my own work:

Archaeology should be conceived as acting as a catalyst in the transformation of the present, for without commitment to one's own historicity, the discipline becomes little more than an escape from our own time and place. (208)

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There are several comments which I would like to make at this stage with respect to Shanks and Tilley's conception of the social value of archaeology. The first concerns the speculative nature of their discussion. Occurring as it does at the end of their

book it has the effect of a post-script - or as a direction for future work, as I have taken it. In fact, looked at in retrospect, post-processual archaeology has not been notably interested in questions of social value and social engagement. One's lasting impression is of a kind of ungrounded theoreticism. In the choice between "theory" and "society", theory has prevailed.

The second comment concerns what might be called the literary or "text-bound" nature of Shanks and Tilley's prescriptions. According to them a critical archaeology will involve "writing" in a new way. It will produce texts which have the effect of "stimulating a reply, a reaction, another text". Whatever happened to notions of praxis, direct action, or - dare one say it - revolution? There is something quintessentially - and even absurdly - post-modern about the notion that we can write a new society into being⁷.

The third point concerns the specificity of archaeology as a pursuit in its own right. Shanks and Tilley describe a situation where archaeology is one amongst a number of cultural practices in late capitalist society which provide a medium for dissent. Archaeology joins a club whose other members are sociology, political-economy, drama, radical poetry, and so on. But is there anything particular to archaeology which suits it to this (or any other) social role? Are there situations where only archaeology will do? To put this more concretely: are there situations where archaeology's interest in the materiality of the historical past suit it to a particular social role?

My final point concerns the oppositional nature of the social role which Shanks and Tilley sketch for archaeology. They write of an archaeology which interrogates and condemns capitalist society, buzzing like a gadfly around the lumbering giant. But are there situations where archaeology can support an existing social formation? Are there situations where archaeology - in however provisional and guarded a way - can support officialised projects of social integration and identity?

7. Also see the section called "Writing in a new way" in Tilley's paper "On Modernity and Archaeological Discourse" (in *Archaeology After Structuralism*, 1990). He begins: "You and I must write material culture and we must write the past and the present. It follows that part of the creation of an alternative past and an understanding of material culture will, of necessity, be to write in a different way than is at present the case. You and I need to experiment in the production of new types of writing, of textual inscription" (143).

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Managing the Past.

Outside of these debates in post-processual theory, questions of social value in archaeology are being settled in a practical way via so-called cultural resource management (CRM). I have chosen as my source on CRM a volume called *Protecting the Past* (1991) edited by George Smith and John Ehrenhard. It is primarily concerned with problems of site looting and destruction, but also with the whole area of public involvement and information and the broad interface between archaeology and society in the United States. It brings together federal policy-makers and planners, CRM practitioners, academics and archaeologists involved in public education projects. Its three prefaces are by Jeremy Sabloff; US senator Pete Domenici who was responsible for writing the Archaeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA) in 1979, which protects archaeological sites on federal land; and Constance Harriman, former Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Fish and Wildlife and Parks, and as such responsible for all cultural and natural resources.

Protecting the Past is intended to be a focussed, up-to-date assessment of the state of CRM, and the nature of the challenges that it faces. It contains a large number of essays describing CRM programmes, setting out proposals, explicating points of law, and so on. What interests me, however, is the language - or more correctly, the discourse of CRM - to which this collection is as good a guide as any. This discourse might be described as a mixture of the technical language and style of bureaucracy, allied with the imagery, key terms and assumptions of business management. Some of the terms to be found in this collection include the following: archaeological resource base; archaeological resource crime (looting, vandalism); archaeological resource management decision makers (this may include the archaeologist him- or herself); and individuals responsible for direct adverse impacts to archaeological resources (or ARs), which may include developers, those responsible for mining or agricultural activities, and so on. The most interesting article in the collection from this point of view, since it is the most nakedly managerial in its language and attitudes, is called "Marketing Archaeological Resource Protection" by Harvey Shields. Admittedly it is written as a kind of proposal, rather than describing an existing situation - nevertheless it fits perfectly with the tone of the collection.

Shields begins with an assertion: "Marketing archaeological resource protection may appear confusing to archaeologists and historic preservationists, who generally receive little or no training in business administration". Yet, he writes, "The two most definitely relate... " (167). He sets out to explore the basic terminology. On marketing, for example: "Marketing acts to influence wants by pointing out how a good or service may fulfil a desire". With respect to archaeology he writes:

The attraction that some people have to archaeology, archaeological sites, and artifacts relates to these basic desires. It may have something to do with the desire of human beings to understand themselves and their origins, or it may have to do with an appreciation for art as manifested in artifacts. Whatever the cause, there is no doubt that some people want to deal with "things archaeological". (167)

A key marketing concept is the "product", which he explains is "really [the] vehicle... for a service". He writes:

The discipline of archaeology provides a wide range of services. For example, it answers questions about human origins and lifeways. It also is the vehicle that produces artifacts to be viewed, appreciated, and/or possessed. The product may be packaged in the form of a dig, a museum, a movie, or, for some, a "tastefully" arranged wall-hanging of arrowheads. (167)

More pertinently, he defines concepts of "value" and "satisfaction":

value is used as the relative rating of a product in providing for, or satisfying, one's need or want. The better a product does that, the more value it has. In an archaeological context, value may be ascribed on the basis of age, association with an historic figure, or monetary value. Satisfaction of the "archaeological desire" can be obtained by a range of options, from viewing or excavating a site or object to actual possession of a site or object. (167-8)

Of course, obtaining satisfaction in this way comes at a price, hence the concepts of "exchange" and "transaction": "Exchange represents the transaction of obtaining a desired product by offering something of value in return and having it accepted". Finally, there is the "market": "For archaeology, the market consists of those people who share the want or desire for "things archaeological" and are willing to enter into exchanges to satisfy these needs" (168). Shields goes on to describe how to identify a group of consumers, and estimate its size and demographic characteristics. A useful

rule of thumb is the 80-20 rule ("This common-sense theorem dictates that 20% of the market does 80% of the consuming", 170). This gives rise to the notion of "target marketing". He describes how to research a target market, how to develop a marketing plan and strategy, and so on⁸.

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This is all very well, but what seems to me to be missing from discussions like this with, all their talk of "management strategies" and "resource utilisation", is any conception of why people might "want" or "need" an archaeological past in the first place. Shields, for example, can offer nothing on this point beside the bland formulations of product marketing. In fact, this is a problem more generally with CRM, and as I would understand it, its major shortcoming: that it lacks a developed conception of social value. Why do people value a sense of the past? What role does such knowledge play in their day-to-day lives? Key policy decisions are taken in terms of a conception of the archaeological past which is utilitarian and technical. Sites are valued for their scientific value, their information value, and their commercial value (or as Shields would have it, their "exchange" value). But what of their social value? Apparently, one of the results of inserting notions of culture and heritage into a commercial and utilitarian nexus, is to lose a conception of their social function. In this connection Hodder (1991) has been critical of CRM on the grounds that it produces interpretations of the past which are "commercialized, fragmented, and unconcerned with local or any social issues" (15)⁹.

Another way of saying this is to assert that CRM is a form of archaeological practice without a politics - or rather, its politics are implicit: this is archaeology on the side of

⁸. For a similar use of the language and concepts of management in archaeology see a collection edited by Malcolm A. Cooper, Anthony Firth, John Carman and David Wheatley called *Managing Archaeology* (1995). It includes essays on "The archaeological manager: applying management models to archaeology" (Malcolm A. Cooper); "Archaeologists in the marketplace" (Marion Blockley); and "Preparing archaeologists for management" (Timothy Darvill). Carole Brooke's essay, "The Bad, the Good and the Ugly: Archaeology and the management discipline", is particularly useful.

⁹. Also see Tilley (1989). He writes that: "The currently emerging culture of strident professionalism especially manifested in cultural resource management has by and large operated so as to effect a drastic reduction of a scope of social vision" (279).

business. Archaeological sites, artefacts and knowledge are "resources" or "products" to be "managed" according to a streamlined and parsimonious set of criteria. It represents a form of archaeology which has made peace with a prevailing capitalist ethos - in fact, it takes pride in the manner in which it so cannily reproduces its structures and organizing assumptions.

A key to understanding CRM is to realize that in both its origins and its guiding ideas it represents a considerable follow-through of the New Archaeology. Charles McGimsey, a founding figure in CRM, provides the foreword to *Protecting the Past* ("Protecting the Past: Cultural Resource Management - A Personal Perspective"). He describes a period of gestation from 1968-1977. A formative event in the development of CRM was the Airlie House conference on the management of archaeological resources held between July and September 1974. At these meetings there crystallized "the concept of "managing" archaeological resources rather than simply investigating them" (xvii). The report which emerged from this process, edited by McGimsey and Davis (1977), "would more or less officially christen, through an official naming ceremony, what had been born over the past few years - the whole concept of cultural resource management" (xxii).

A phrase from McGimsey's foreword is worth recording. He writes that before the more systematic approach of CRM, the situation in archaeology had been one of "a channelling of available human resources towards archaeological targets of opportunity" (xviii). It might as easily have come from a passage by Binford: there is the same love of jargon, the same attempt at a scientificity which is not quite achieved. More generally with CRM and the New Archaeology, there is the same technocratic approach, the same fundamental mistrust of - and desire to keep at arm's length - issues of culture and society.

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Points of Departure: Grahame Clark's *Archaeology and Society*.

I would like to develop the discussion of archaeology and social value in an altogether different direction, and one more related to the contexts which I began by discussing. As a way of introducing this I shall consider a work from the traditional canon of archaeological theory which, perhaps more than any other, is concerned

with the question of social value. On the face of it Grahame Clark's *Archaeology and Society* would appear to be an unlikely source for a post-colonial archaeology. Indeed, there is a rich irony in quoting with approval from the work of an archaeologist who has been accused of elitism, and who has come to embody a particular strand of reactionary traditionalism in British archaeology¹⁰. Nevertheless, perhaps precisely because he writes from an anterior humanist tradition in archaeology, he manages to raise a series of themes and issues which speak directly to the contexts of which I write.

Archaeology and Society was an ongoing project which went through several editions from the date of its first publication in 1939. The passage which I shall consider is taken from the third edition (1957), where it forms the final chapter, "Prehistory and Today". Clark begins with a question which, framed in Britain in the 1950s, retains its pertinence:

However distasteful the question may be to those engaged in prehistoric research and to their immediate followers, the question has to be faced whether the study of prehistory has any relevance to modern society, or, more specifically, whether it is sufficiently relevant to warrant the diversion of funds and of potentially productive men, skills, materials, and land. Does prehistory really mean enough to us today to support such large claims on social resources? (251)

The answers which he arrives at are no less pertinent. In the first place he explores the potential of archaeology as a medium for education. He writes: "Let us... consider very briefly wherein the special qualifications of archaeology as a medium for education consist" (252). First, they lie in the liberating sense of perspective which it provides. Archaeology "helps to lift people out of the limitations of their own time and place and to make them free of the whole experience of mankind" (253). In a nice phrase he writes that it gives them the "power... to inherit the life of past ages". A second qualification is the communality of experience which an archaeological past implies: "literate civilizations reflect divergent traditions, whereas prehistory... is relevant to the experience of all human beings" (253). A third is its appeal to the

¹⁰. In *A History of Archaeological Thought* (1989) Trigger reflects critically on the elitist view of human history expounded by Clark, notably in his more recent work, *The Identity of Man* (1983) and *Symbols of Excellence* (1986). He writes of the "vast ideological gap" that separates this work from Childe's "interpretation of the baleful effects of class exploitation on the technological development and quality of life in the early civilizations" (401).

imagination. Archaeology "brings us up against the frontiers of knowledge", beyond which we proceed by the deployment of science and the imagination. A fourth qualification is the fact that it develops "an awareness of place" (254). This is in the broad sense of "an understanding of the intricate relations between human societies and their physical environments". A further characteristic of archaeology which suits it to this educative role concerns its particular attachment to material culture. Clark writes: "the dependence of archaeology primarily on artifacts and the fact that considerations of style enter so largely into the classification of cultures and of phases in their development both imply a strong element of aesthetic appreciation" (254). He concludes: "Anything that entertains individuals and at the same time increases their sense of being alive must be accounted a benefit to society at large" (255).

He writes: "No doubt other ways could be found of illustrating the value of archaeology to the individual, but it now remains to consider its specifically social value" (255). Here Clark has something else in mind: "what I am thinking of now is something more specific, the contribution archaeology can make to social solidarity and integration" (255). In a crucial passage Clark gives his own conception of the social value of an awareness of the past:

In its broadest connotation history is a basic need, a very condition, of human societies, which are distinguished from others precisely in that they are constituted by historical rather than merely by innate, biological inheritance. Indeed, without the solidarity based on sharing common traditions, by an awareness of common histories, it is difficult to see how human societies could ever have developed their culture through long ages up to the point at which they could not only read and record their own history, but conceivably terminate it finally and irretrievably. Human societies exist in the last resort because their members are aware of belonging to them, and a major factor in this is a consciousness of sharing a common past. (255)

The particular value of archaeology in this regard is that it works with material culture, a kind of physical actualisation of history. Clark writes: "Archaeology is able to make this social contribution as a historical discipline and as one which, thanks to the nature of its material, is able to make history actual in a way that the written page can seldom do" (255). He makes the link with nationalism, and with a notion that forms a prominent part of official discourse in post-apartheid South Africa, the notion of "nation-building": "archaeology by recovering material, visible remains of this history from the very soil of the homeland provides just the kind of evidence needed

to reinforce the sense of belonging [to a nation]. That those concerned with building nations should have cherished archaeology... is entirely in accordance with this" (256).

Clark notes that: "The revival of national sentiment in recent times has been richly nourished by and has also favoured the prosecution of archaeology" (256). He cites as examples the period of intense archaeological activity that followed the establishment of the republic in Ireland, and the efflorescence of archaeological research in Eastern Europe in the inter-war period. Japan and China adopted archaeological programmes as part of the process of modernization. With respect to archaeology and decolonisation, he notes that: "The movement towards independence in the Middle East, where Old World civilization originally developed, has found expression among other ways in the staffing of Antiquities Services by nationals in place of Westerners and in controlling more or less rigidly the export of antiquities" (258). Independent India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka "have all maintained or instituted, as the case may be, their archaeological services" (259). Of Africa he writes: "it may be anticipated that as the various African territories enter on a fuller control of their affairs they also will continue and develop services for the excavation, preservation, and publication of the archaeological traces of their past" (259).

However, Clark also writes of another side of the use of the past in the pursuit of nationalist aims - a darker side, or as he has it, a "pathological" use of the archaeological past. He writes: "The leaders of National Socialist Germany showed a clear-sighted recognition of the value of archaeology for enhancing solidarity, even if their aims in doing so were nefarious" (259). He quotes Gustaf Kossina (who in turn is para-phrasing the historian Sybel) on the value of history: "a nation which fails to keep in living touch with its past is as near to drying up as a tree with severed roots. We are today, what we were yesterday" (259). Heinrich Himmler (who Clark describes as that "mild connoisseur of prehistory") reportedly defined archaeology as "the doctrine of the eminence of the Germans at the dawn of civilization" (260).

Clark ends his chapter with a discussion of two familiar themes in archaeological theory. The first is the notion of a world history. He writes: "As we have seen one of the most potent factors in social integration is history. If people are to be led to feel themselves members of a world society, one way of helping them to do so is to stimulate their consciousness of world history" (261). This involves expanding "the unit of history... from the parochial to the universal, from the history of the nation or

civilization to that of the world" (261). This "universal history" needs to be capable of crossing class barriers and appealing to the under-privileged as well as "the old leisured class in western society" (262). In order to do this it "must be addressed to a culture dominated by science and by what may be termed scientific humanism" (262).

The second theme is the Childean one of progress: "All men, whatever the colour of their skin and however recently - or long ago - they emerged from prehistory, can recognize in the archaeological traces of their remote prehistoric forebears symbols both of their common kinship and of the glorious fact of human progress" (263).

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Clark's chapter lays itself open to criticism on a number of points. In the first place it is dated, and it shows its datedness in several ways. A phrase like "scientific humanism" rings strangely in our ears, just as his assertion of "the glorious fact of human progress" must have rung strangely, even in his own day (as Childe points out). More damagingly, we should be rightly critical of the universalizing aspirations of Clark's notion of world history. Underneath Clark's assertions of common purpose in human history, would appear to lie a conservative awareness of social difference. In one passage he writes: "The fact that in the free countries of the world modern conditions have favoured the masses as consumers does not alter the fact that ideas come from the comparatively small minority of the highly educated" (262). The notion of world history would appear to be an attempt, not so much to overcome, as to elide, class differences; and we might suspect that in Clark we have yet another member of an historically privileged elite asserting a rather naive version of common humanity, after the fact of colonialism.

Nevertheless, I want to suggest that there is much that is useful and redemptive in Clark's account. His comments on the educational value of archaeology serve to thematise what has recently emerged as a separate area of discussion in the discipline. In the same vein, his comments on materiality are ahead of their time, particularly in their appreciation of the social effects of material as against textual sources. Most of all, the usefulness of Clark's chapter lies in what I would understand to be his principle theme, the role of archaeology in negotiating the complexities of

nationhood and identity. And it is this theme which I want to carry over to a discussion of archaeology in post-colonial contexts¹¹.

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Nationalism, Identity and Memory in the Archaeological Past.

I. Re-Thinking Nationalism.

The subject of nationalism has been a hot-potato for post-processual archaeology. Just as the experience of apartheid made the notion of ethnicity a dubious and difficult subject for South African academics, so the experience of two world wars and the memory of fascism have made nationalism a difficult subject for archaeologists in Britain and Europe. Hodder begins his introductory chapter to *Archaeological Theory in Europe; The last three decades* (1991) by describing the scene of a personal encounter. He writes:

As I took the book down from the shelf in the library a slight shiver went through me. It was a slim, old book. The excitement that I felt was not the thrill of handling for the first time a great masterpiece that had shaped the course of scholarship, although it is true that this book had indeed had a formative influence on the long-term development of European archaeology through its

¹¹. Ray Inskeep has also remarked on the relevance of Clark's work to a South African context. In October 1970 he published an essay called "Archaeology and Society in South Africa" (originally given as a Presidential Address to Section F of the South African Association for the Advancement of Science) in which he draws freely from Clark in answering the questions: "What is the profession of archaeology? What is its role in South African society and what is its status?" (302). It is typical of the far-sighted nature of much of Inskeep's work that he should have concerned himself with the question of social value on this occasion. Writing in the idiom of the day he notes that: "One of the most interesting and encouraging activities in several of the newly emerged Black States of Africa is the seriousness with which they have applied themselves to the archaeological investigation of their pre-colonial history; the search for a sense of identity lost in the breakdown of tribal authority, and tribal tradition - generally, though not always at the hands of the white man... In this enquiry archaeology has a major role to play. If there were no other justification for the pursuit of archaeology in South Africa it would be more than sufficient that it should provide some credentials for the eleven million "non-white" inhabitants" (305).

definition of archaeological "cultures". Rather, my shiver was closer to fear and to the feeling of terror that books such as this had contributed to, or had been used to justify, acts of the greatest barbarism that Europe and the world have seen. (1)

The book is Gustaf Kossina's *Die Herkunft der Germanen* published in 1920. In this work Kossina uses settlement archaeology to demonstrate the supposed descent of an Aryan race from Indo-Germans, and the spread of cultural influence from a superior core area. He argues, for example, that parts of Poland had been Germanic since the Iron Age, based on their archaeological assemblages. Kossina's work had two historical outcomes, of which Hodder is acutely mindful. The first was to provide the basis for Childe's formulation of the idea of archaeological cultures in *The Dawn of European Civilization*, and thereby to provide what is "perhaps the single most significant building block of European prehistory" (3). The second was to underwrite National Socialism in the Third Reich via Himmler's adoption of Kossina's work and methods. In 1935 Himmler founded the *Deutsches Ahenenerbe* (German Forefathers' Heritage), which conducted archaeological excavations from 1938. Kossina's methods were obligatory. Excavations were carried out by SS men, often to exacting standards, with the aim of identifying a Germanic cultural area. "Every SS unit stationed within the territory of the Reich was supposed to have a Germanic excavation in the area to act as a cultural focus of "Germanic greatness"" (2). Thus Hodder traces the connections between the development of archaeology in Europe, the development of fascism, and the potential for ethnogenetic mobilizations of the culture-historical method. His encounter with Kossina's book figures as an encounter with a dangerous potential hidden in traditional archaeology. Childe's heirs (Hodder reminds us) are at one and the same time the heirs of Gustaf Kossina.

In post-processual archaeology this wariness of nationalism has been translated into a suspicion of grand narratives and totalizing categories, and the insistent manner in which it interrogates settled notions of culture and identity. Indeed, from this perspective one way of understanding post-processualism - like post-structuralism more generally - is as a reaction against the destructive potential of nationalism (along with other essentializing cultural constructs). In the same vein, although for different reasons, the New Archaeology has been accused of being anti-nationalist. Trigger (1989) notes that the anti-historicism of the New Archaeology included an anti-nationalist element. He writes that the New Archaeology can be "viewed as an ideological reflection of the increasing economic and political interventionism of the United States on a global scale after World War II" (314). In part this was a reaction

against regional nationalisms: "Its emphasis on nomothetic generalizations was accompanied by the obvious implication that the study of any national tradition as an end in itself was of trivial importance" (314). Trigger notes that in 1973 Richard Ford "called into question the legitimacy of "political archaeology" and of any correlation between archaeology and nationalism, asking archaeologists instead to embrace a "universal humanism" (314-5)¹². He continues: "By denying the worth of such studies the New Archaeology suggested the unimportance of national traditions themselves and of anything that stood in the way of American economic activity and political influence" (315). He concludes that: "While New Archaeologists may not have been conscious agents in the promotion of United States political and economic hegemony, their programme appears to have accorded with this policy" (315)¹³.

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And yet, in South Africa (and in the Third World more generally) the idea of nationalism would appear to have a currency which makes it more difficult to dismiss. Part of the destructive legacy of apartheid is the manner in which it acted against the idea of nationalism understood as an inclusive concept, as a broad South Africanism. Its energies were directed towards segregating, disaggregating, dividing - above all, towards finding and defining difference. One thinks of the multiplicity of racial and

12. This was in an essay called "Archaeology serving humanity", in C.L. Redman ed. *Research and Theory in Current Archaeology*.

13. More recently there have been signs of a resurgence of interest in the topic of archaeology and nationalism amongst First World archaeologists. In particular see the collection edited by Marguerita Diaz-Andreu and Timothy Champion called *Nationalism and Archaeology in Europe* (1996). In their introductory essay Diaz-Andreu and Champion write: "We have all been surprised by the growth of a series of ideologies in recent years that we thought had been definitively buried after the drama of the Second World War" (1). What they have in mind is nationalism, "an ideology virtually censored during almost four decades and which no-one felt was useful to reconsider" (1). In the same year there appeared a collection edited by John Atkinson, Iain Banks and Jerry O'Sullivan called *Nationalism and Archaeology* (1996), derived from the proceedings of a conference hosted by the Scottish Archaeological Forum in April 1994. For attempts to define notions of nationalism, identity and ethnicity see papers by Iain Banks ("Archaeology, nationalism and ethnicity"), and Michael Tierney ("The nation, nationalism and national identity"). Mark Pluciennik's essay, "A perilous but necessary search: archaeology and European identities", is both a discussion of the double-edged nature of nationalism, and the meaning of notions of "European-ness".

ethnic identities under apartheid, the subtle differentiae, the involuted classifications, the whole mad system with its bureaucrats from a Kafkaesque nightmare. This idea of difference was carried through to every area of life under apartheid: different schools, different churches, different sexual partners, different jobs, different histories, eventually (in a later development of the Bantustan policy) different nationalisms. This wrenching apart of South African society was given visible expression in the practice of forced removals, the wrenching apart of communities. The divided landscapes that they produced, with their patchwork of white and black areas, are emblematic of this dislocation, the sense in which South Africa consists not of one society but of several.

It follows that the work of social reconstruction should be phrased in terms of nationalism, and of so-called nation-building¹⁴. The idea - and this is an idea which I endorse - is that to create a functioning society and heal the wounds of the past we need to adopt an inclusive national identity, able to offer a home to the totality of groups, interests, and divisions in South African society. Of course this is a project which comes with its own contradictions, its own ideological traps; but these are contradictions which can - and which need to be - negotiated. There are two further points which I want to make with regard to nationalism in Third World contexts. The first concerns the importance of nationalism as a force mobilized against colonialism. In South Africa the resistance against apartheid was carried out in the name of an African Nationalist revolution. This nationalism, with its key descriptors - non-racialism, non-sexism - formed the ideological core of resistance. My second point concerns the strategic importance of nationalism as a resource in the positioning for global resources. For an economically weak country to renounce nationalism from a post-modern sense of its inherent contradictions - admirable as such a gesture might be - would almost certainly open it to the further deprivations of roving multi-nationals, or those on the look-out for geo-political advantage.

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Nationalism: Irony and Commitment.

¹⁴. For a discussion of archaeology in relation to the notion of nation-building in a Third World context see Jo Mangi's case study from Papua New Guinea, "The role of archaeology in nation building" (in *Conflict in the Archaeology of Living Traditions*, 1989).

Contemporary theory gives us some help in re-thinking the idea of nationalism. There are two works in particular to which I want to refer. The first is an essay by Frederic Jameson called "Third-World Literature in the Era of Multinational Capitalism" (1986). It had a considerable impact when it appeared, and sparked a debate in the field of literary studies¹⁵. Although it deals only glancingly with nationalism *per se*, Jameson's comments are useful in addressing the concerns set out above.

Jameson begins by noting among third-world intellectuals "an obsessive return to the national situation itself, the name of the country that returns again and again like a gong" (65). He writes of the strangeness with which this strikes a First World sensibility: "This is not the way American intellectuals have been discussing "America", and indeed one might feel that the whole matter is nothing but that old thing called "nationalism", long since liquidated here and rightly so". He continues: "Yet a certain nationalism is fundamental in the third world... thus making it legitimate to ask whether it is all that bad in the end. Does in fact the message of some disabused and more experienced first-world wisdom (that of Europe even more than of the United States) consist in urging these nation states to outgrow it as fast as possible?" (65).

His answer is a qualified "no". Further on in the narrative he pauses to "insert a cautionary reminder about the dangers of the concept of "culture" itself" (77). He writes: "Nor can I feel that the concept of cultural "identity" or even national "identity" is adequate. One cannot acknowledge the justice of the general poststructuralist assault on the so-called "centred subject", the old unified ego of bourgeois individualism, and then resuscitate this same ideological mirage of psychic unification on the collective level in the form of a doctrine of collective identity" (78). But, he continues: "Appeals to collective identity need to be evaluated from a historical perspective, rather than the standpoint of some dogmatic and placeless "ideological analysis". When a third-world writer invokes this (to us) ideological value, we need to examine the concrete historical situation closely in order to determine the political consequences of the strategic use of this concept" (78).

15. For example, see Aijaz Ahmad (1992) "Jameson's Rhetoric of Otherness and the "National Allegory"".

Terry Eagleton provides a more detailed response to the question of nationalism in an essay called "Nationalism: Irony and Commitment", in a collection which focuses on Irish nationalism viewed from the perspective of its literary production (*Nationalism, Colonialism and Literature* 1990). The other essays in the collection are by Jameson and Said, and the introduction is by Seamus Deane¹⁶. Eagleton begins by quoting an African character in Raymond Williams's novel *Second Generation* (1964). "Nationalism," he remarks, "is in this sense like class. To have it and to feel it, is the only way to end it. If you fail to claim it, or give it up too soon, you will merely be cheated, by other classes and other nations" (1990: 23). To undo the alienation inherent in the concept of nationalism (and Eagleton begins from the position that the kind of self-identity implied by nationalism is a form of alienation), it is necessary not to go "around" it, "but somehow all the way through it and out the other side" (23). He warns against the form of utopian thinking which seeks to circumvent the notion of nationalism: "To wish class or nation away, to seek to live sheer irreducible difference *now* in the manner of some contemporary post-structuralist theory, is to play straight into the hands of the oppressor" (23).

Eagleton draws a direct parallel with feminist theory and political activism. He notes that the philosopher Julia Kristeva argues that the whole concept of gender is "metaphysical" - as Eagleton puts it, that it constitutes "a violent stabilizing of the sheer precariousness and ambiguity of sexual identity to some spuriously self-identical essence" (23). Yet the fact remains that women are oppressed *as women*: ontologically empty as such sexual categories may be, they

continue to exert an implacable political force. It would thus be the worst form of premature utopianism for women to strive now merely to circumvent their sexual identities, celebrating only the particular and polymorphous, rather than - once again - try somehow to go right through those estranging definitions to emerge somewhere on the other side. (24)

In a passage which captures this double-bind logic, he writes:

Sexual politics, like class or nationalist struggle, will thus necessarily be caught up in the very metaphysical categories it hopes finally to abolish; and

¹⁶ Deane writes in his introduction of the "remarkable" literature produced in Ireland in the first three decades of the century "in which the attempt to overcome and replace the colonial experience by something other, something that would be "native" and yet not provincial, was a dynamic and central energy" (1990: 3).

any such movement will demand a difficult, perhaps ultimately impossible double optic, at once fighting on a terrain already mapped out by its antagonists and seeking even now to prefigure within that mundane strategy styles of being and identity for which we have as yet no proper names. (24)

Thus Eagleton (like Jameson) is able to endorse the notion of nationalism in colonial situations, from a sense of its strategic value, and to write in a highly critical manner of "those who would now dismiss the notion of an Irish nationalist culture from the tap rooms of Tottenham or the senior common rooms of Oxbridge" (28).

The question now becomes one of tying together a re-tooled notion of nationalism, with the particular concerns and issues of anti- and post-colonial contexts, and the role and value of an archaeological past. In this regard, I want to refer to a body of literature which has been largely disregarded by archaeologists, but which manages to address this question in relevant and interesting ways.

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National Culture and Liberation.

A number of Africanist writers have commented on the value of the pre-colonial past in overcoming the legacy of colonialism. Chinua Achebe asks in "The Truth of Fiction" (in a collection called *Hopes and Impediments*, 1988), "what great solace can many of us recent colonials derive from an effective history which is so nasty, British and short?" (100). In an essay called "The Novelist as Teacher" from the same volume, he writes: "I would be quite satisfied if my novels (especially the ones I set in the past) did no more than teach my readers that their past - with all its imperfections - was not one long night of savagery from which the first Europeans acting on God's behalf delivered them" (30). Steve Biko comments on the effects of colonialism on history. He writes (in "White Racism and Black Consciousness", 1978): "colonialism is never satisfied with having the native in his grip but, by some strange logic, it must turn to the past and disfigure and distort it" (95). In "We Blacks" he comments: "A people without a positive history is like a vehicle without an engine" (1978: 29).

However, it is the passionate, engaged writings of the Martinique-born spokesperson of the Algerian revolution, Frantz Fanon, that we find the most striking affirmation of

the social value of the pre-colonial past. In an essay called "On National Culture" from that classic of anti-colonial literature, *The Wretched of the Earth* (1976 [1967]), he writes, in a passage of which Biko's words are an echo: "Colonialism is not satisfied merely with holding a people in its grip and emptying the native's brain of all form and content. By a kind of perverted logic, it turns to the past of the oppressed people, and distorts, disfigures and destroys it" (169). He describes the coming into being of a class of native intellectuals: "Inside the political parties, and most often in offshoots from these parties, cultured individuals of the colonized race make their appearance. For these individuals, the demand for a national culture and the affirmation of the existence of such a culture represents a special battle-field". He writes: "While the politicians situate their action in actual present-day events, men of culture take their stand in the field of history" (168).

In a moving passage, Fanon describes the motivation behind this engagement with the past:

The passion with which native intellectuals defend the existence of their national culture may be a source of amazement; but those who condemn this exaggerated passion are strangely apt to forget that their own psyche and their own selves are conveniently sheltered behind a French or German culture which has given full proof of its existence and which is uncontested.

I am ready to concede that on the plane of factual being the past existence of an Aztec civilization does not change anything very much in the diet of the Mexican peasant of today. I admit that all the proofs of a wonderful Songhai civilization will not change the fact that today the Songhais are under-fed and illiterate, thrown between sky and water with empty heads and empty eyes. But it has been remarked several times that this passionate search for a national culture which existed before the colonial era finds its legitimate reason in the anxiety shared by native intellectuals to shrink away from being swamped. Because they realize they are in danger of losing their lives and thus becoming lost to their people, these men, hot-headed and with anger in their hearts, relentlessly determine to renew contact once more with the oldest and most pre-colonial springs of life of their people. (168-9)

He continues: perhaps this "passionate research" is "directed by the secret hope of discovering beyond the misery of today, beyond the self-contempt, resignation and abjuration, some very beautiful and splendid era whose existence rehabilitates us both in regard to ourselves and in regard to others" (169). Since they "could not stand wonder-struck before the history of today's barbarity, [these native

intellectuals] decided to go back farther and to delve deeper down; and, let us make no mistake, it was with the greatest delight that they discovered that there was nothing to be ashamed of in the past, but rather dignity, glory and solemnity" (169).

Fanon was writing out of an intellectual milieu greatly influenced by existentialist philosophy. We hear the cadences of Jean-Paul Sartre in his work. Writing more than a decade later in the context of the armed struggle against Portuguese colonialism in Guinea, Amílcar Cabral forcefully restates these themes. Although he does not refer to Fanon, his essay, "National Liberation and Culture" (in *Return to the Source*, 1974), forms a kind of companion piece to this earlier work. Cabral's specific concern is with the role of culture as an instrument of national liberation. For Cabral, the relation between culture and history is direct and "organic", as it is for Fanon. He writes: "culture is an essential element of the history of a people. Culture is, perhaps, the product of this history just as the flower is the product of the plant" (42).

Cabral defines culture broadly, throwing the armed struggle itself into the net of national culture (he famously describes the armed struggle for liberation as "an act of insemination upon history" 1974: 55). He writes of colonial repression: "The political and armed resistance of the people of the Portuguese colonies, as of other countries or regions in Africa, was crushed by the technical superiority of the imperialist conqueror". However, the "cultural resistance" to colonialism was kept alive: "Repressed, persecuted, betrayed by some social groups who were in league with the colonialists, African culture survived all the storms, taking refuge in the villages, in the forests and in the spirit of the generations who were victims of colonialism" (49). In a passage which demonstrates something of the interchangeability of the terms: history, culture, anti-colonial struggle; Cabral writes: "Like the seed which long awaits conditions favourable to germination in order to assure the survival of the species and its development, the culture of African peoples flourishes again today, across the continent, in struggles for national liberation" (49). Like Fanon, Cabral specifically mentions the archaeological past as an element of national culture. He writes that Africa "has showed herself to be one of the richest of continents in cultural values. From Carthage to Giza to Zimbabwe, from Meroe to Benin and Ife, from Sahara or Timbuktu to Kilwa, across the immensity and diversity of the continent's natural conditions, the culture of the African peoples is an undeniable reality" (50).

Finally, for Fanon, as for Cabral, notions of culture and liberation are firmly bound up with the idea of nationalism. Cabral writes: "the liberation struggle is, above all, a

struggle for the preservation and survival of the cultural values of the people and for the harmonization and development of these values within a national framework" (48). For Fanon culture is finally national culture, just as liberation is national liberation. In the concluding paragraph of "On National Culture" he writes: "If man is known by his acts, then we will say that the most urgent thing today for the intellectual is to build up the nation... Far from keeping aloof from other nations... it is national liberation which leads the nation to play its part on the stage of history. It is at the heart of national consciousness that international consciousness lives and grows. And this two-fold emerging is ultimately the source of all culture" (199).

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Colonialism and Consciousness.

A second theme to emerge from this literature concerns the effects of colonialism on consciousness. The sense here is of colonialism laying bare the consciousness of the colonial subject, and implanting an alien set of values and ideas. Ngugi writes of what he calls the "cultural bomb" (in the introduction to *Decolonising the Mind*, 1986):

The effect of a cultural bomb is to annihilate a people's belief in their names, in their languages, in their environment, in their heritage of struggle, in their unity, in their capacities and ultimately in themselves. It makes them see their past as one wasteland of non-achievement and it makes them want to distance themselves from that wasteland. (3)

John Daniel discusses this phenomenon in terms of Marcuse's notion of internalised oppression. In an essay called "The Culture of Dependency" (in John Daniel and Dennis Cohen eds. *Political Economy of Africa*, 1981), he writes:

The culture of dependency refers to the kinds of attitudes engendered in a dependent people through their exploitation by a dominant people. It includes submission to domination as well as emulation by the dependent peoples of the attitudes and behaviour patterns of the dominant group. (164)

He continues that for such a process to be really effective, the colonial subject

must not only absorb the values of the political system but also internalise them, i.e. acquire more than just a cognitive awareness of the prevailing

societal values but actually believe them and accept them as their own because they judge them to be good and proper ones. (164)

This theme receives its fullest articulation in an extraordinary work by Ashis Nandy, called *The Intimate Enemy; Loss and Recovery of Self under Colonialism* (1983). Nandy's purpose is to enquire into "the psychological structures and cultural forces which supported or resisted the culture of colonialism in British India" (xvi). He gives the idea of the effects of colonialism on consciousness a special place in his analysis. He writes:

It is becoming increasingly obvious that colonialism - as we have come to know it during the last two hundred years - cannot be identified with only economic gain and political power... The political economy of colonialism is of course important, but the crudity and inanity of colonialism are principally expressed in the sphere of psychology... (1-2)

In this context he writes of a

second form of colonization... [which] colonizes minds in addition to bodies and... releases forces within the colonized societies to alter their cultural priorities once and for all. In the process, it helps generalize the concept of the modern West from a geographical and temporal entity to a psychological category. The West is now everywhere, within the West and outside; in structures and in minds. (xi)

In this context the social value of archaeology - and here the reference is specifically to a pre-colonial past - lies in its potential to effect a transformation in consciousness, and to bring about a rehabilitation of the self. Immediately following the passage in which he describes the native intellectual's encounter with the pre-colonial past, Fanon writes: "The claim to a national culture in the past does not only rehabilitate the nation and serve as a justification for the hope of a future national culture. In the sphere of psycho-affective equilibrium it is responsible for an important change in the native" (169). The model here (a model which is familiar to us from discussions of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission) is that of history as therapy - or as Chinweizu has it, "history as cultural therapy" (in an essay called "Decolonising African History", 1987). He writes: "the colonialist history of Africa was composed and used as a song of disorientation. The false image of Africa it concocted was a paralysing bullet for our souls. If we are to rouse ourselves from the induced paralysis, we have to

counter that image, change that song, draw up a correct map" (75). He quotes the historian Joseph Ki-Zerbo¹⁷ as saying that:

History can play the same role as the psychoanalyst. As long as we don't know how to explain certain events, certain behaviour which exists today in the individual and collective planes, we will remain prisoners of our past because we don't understand it. But if one doesn't understand his history, even his own private history, he can cultivate complexes, believing, for example, that one is damned. If one doesn't know who one is, one can't think what one wants or what one will become. I think that the almost exclusive role of history is to lay down this fundamental base of development. (74)

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The themes which emerge are compelling. Here we have a conception of the past as a point of individual and cultural affirmation. It sees the past as potentially redemptive and empowering. The archaeological past acts as an alternative point of identity and social cohesion. It serves to overcome the effects of colonialism by restoring the former subjects of colonialism to a fuller sense of themselves. Implicit in this notion is an understanding of the archaeological past as a resource to be mobilized as part of an anti-colonial project, whether in the armed sense of Cabral, or the more inward sense of Fanon. In each case the result is the same: a vital connection between a developed sense of the past, a national culture, and liberation from colonialism.

This is a conception of the social value of the archaeological past to which I would like to link the project of a post-colonial archaeology. For the moment let me state it baldly, without the necessary qualifications that one inevitably builds into such a discussion: It is by attaching ourselves to these grand themes - social integration, national identity, and a recovery of the self - that a post-colonial archaeology can find a place for itself which makes it at once a lived reality, and a socially necessary and relevant force in post-colonial society. At the same time, I want to go further in asserting that archaeology has two characteristics - or as Clark would have it, two "special qualifications" - which especially suit it to this role. The first is archaeology's particular perspective on human origins and the long history of human social

17. Joseph Ki-Zerbo is an African historian from Burkina Faso. He was one of the editors of the *UNESCO General History of Africa*. These remarks are taken from an unpublished 1982 interview.

development. This "deep" view of history has the potential to provide a shared frame of reference, and a reminder of our common humanity, which is a useful basis for constructing more inclusive forms of identity.

The second special qualification of archaeology relates to the material nature of the traces which it recovers. Quite simply, the materiality of artefacts, and their particular histories of interment and discovery, can put us in touch with the deep past and with the identities which flow from that past in ways that are concrete, immediate, and visible. In Clark's ringing phrase, archaeology contributes to national sentiment "by recovering material, visible memorials of this [national] history from the very soil of the homeland" (1957: 256). The stories that archaeologists tell carry the charge of the soil, the particular resonance which comes from their nature as objects: earth-histories and bone-narratives - or as Goodwin had it, "Stories in Stone".

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The Ambiguities of Nationalism.

Of course, it would be impossible to simply leave it at that. There is a sense in which the writings which I have referred to above come from a philosophical and theoretical perspective which, in terms of its concerns, rhythms, and positions, is more modernist than post-modern. Cabral and Fanon (or Biko, or Ngugi) write with a kind of directness and lack of circumspection which would be unusual in contemporary theoretical writing. They freely employ those terms which strike us as dangerous and at the same time thrilling: national culture, national liberation, the idea of the imprint of colonialism on the psyche. Writing in the 1990s one cannot endorse such a project for social cohesion and national identity without building in a series of disclaimers, without qualifying and defending it on certain fronts.

At the same time there are real problems, issues and questions raised by the core terms around which these passages array themselves - the notion of identity, for example. "Identity" implies a merging of differences, a collapsing of "difference" into "sameness". But how can differences ever merge, other than through a kind of pretence? Identity would seem to be a concept which even as it proclaims itself, acknowledges the differences which underlie it (and which it hides). Fanon's essay "On National Culture" is preceded in *The Wretched of the Earth* by a companion

essay called "The Pitfalls of National Consciousness" (1976), which is at the same time a kind of cautionary tale. Fanon's concern is with the use of nationalism in the service of class interests, to mask the real social differences perpetuated by economic inequality. As such his essay comprises a withering attack on the national bourgeoisie in the ex-colonies ("In under-developed countries we have seen that no true bourgeoisie exists; there is only a sort of little greedy caste, avid and voracious, with the mind of a huckster, only too glad to accept the dividends that the former colonial power hands out to it", 141). He writes:

A bourgeoisie that provides nationalism alone as food for the masses fails in its historical mission and gets caught up in a whole series of mishaps... if nationalism is not made explicit, if it is not enriched and deepened by a very rapid transformation into a consciousness of social and political needs, in other words into humanism, it leads up a blind alley... Then the flag and the palace where sits the government cease to be the symbols of the nation. The nation deserts these brightly lit, empty shells... (164-5)

The notion of culture itself is subject to a certain slipperiness in these passages, particularly when it becomes that other thing, a national culture. Culture both is and is not subject to the effects of colonialism: it retains its potential for opposition, yet is effaced from the consciousness of the colonial subject. Cabral's organic metaphor implies a conception of culture as something which grows and changes; yet at the same time it is the seed which lies dormant in the earth, and retains its essential character. More seriously, the social contexts in which African people find themselves have shifted fundamentally over the past 30 years. What does it mean to talk of a concept like national culture as used by Fanon and Cabral, in a context of indebtedness and economic collapse, the kinds of contexts described by Leys?

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Post-colonial versus Nationalist Archaeologies.

As a way of addressing these concerns and at the same time situating the discussion in the particular context of debates and discussions in archaeological theory, I want to distinguish the notion of a post-colonial archaeology interested in nationalism, from a nationalist archaeology as Trigger describes it (in "Alternative Archaeologies: Nationalist, Colonialist, Imperialist" 1984). Trigger writes critically of archaeological

activities "directed towards strengthening patriotic sentiments" (358). Trigger cites three examples which are helpful in this regard: In the modern state of Israel archaeology has played a role "in affirming the links between an intrusive population and its own ancient past and by doing so asserts the right of that population to the land" (358). Masada, the site of the last Zealot resistance to the Romans in A.D. 73 "has become a monument possessing great symbolic value for the Israeli people... [and] Its excavation was one of the most massive archaeological projects undertaken by Israeli archaeologists" (359). In modern China in the wake of the cultural revolution "archaeology is extensively encouraged as a means of cultivating national dignity and confidence". Its cultural achievements are "lauded... as testimonials to the skills of worker-artisans in ancient times" (359). By way of contrast, he quotes the Vietnamese archaeologist Van Trong (1979: 6) who sees in the archaeological record of southeast Asia a "deep and solid basis" for Vietnamese culture which, despite heavy pressure, "refused to be submerged by Chinese culture while many other cultures... were subjugated and annihilated" (359-60). Finally, he specifically designates nationalist archaeology as the succeeding stage in the development of colonialist archaeology. He writes: "the archaeology of post-colonial Africa is being transformed from a colonialist into a nationalist type" (363).

Perhaps the best example of such writing in an African context is the work of the Senegalese intellectual, Cheikh Anta Diop. Martin Hall discusses the work of Diop in a section headed "Archaeology and Nationalism" in *Archaeology Africa* (1996). Diop was concerned to claim ancient Egypt for African scholarship and African cultural history. He stressed the achievements of Egyptian civilization and pointed out that the ancient Egyptians were black. In a more controversial aspect of his work he asserted that the Nile Valley was the point of origin for a range of African people, from the Fulani to the Zulu, and used archaeological evidence to trace their migration routes. Although the work of Diop has been widely criticised, Hall writes that it "has been highly effective in demolishing the tenets of colonial histories of Africa" (37). He also notes that the recent interest in Martin Bernal's work has served to focus attention back on Negritude historians like Diop.

However, as a way of organizing a response to some of the points raised by Trigger's examples, I want to discuss a local work which I would understand to be an example of a nationalist archaeology in the sense in which Trigger uses the term. Ken Mufuka's short work called *Dzimbahwe; Life and Politics in the Golden Age 1100-1500 A.D.* was published in 1983, shortly after Zimbabwean independence. Its

ostensible purpose is a serious one: to reclaim the site of Great Zimbabwe and its contemporary significance, away from a tradition of settler historical and archaeological scholarship. At the same time he announces a methodological departure in his use of oral sources as a complement to the archaeological evidence. However, these intentions are undone by an approach which falls neatly into the traps which lie in the way of a nationalist archaeology. I shall refer to two sets of passages, both of which come from a chapter called "Life at Great Zimbabwe". The first appear under the heading "Egalitarian Society", and deal with the social structure of the Great Zimbabwe state; the second are a set of fantasy passages which occur earlier in the chapter, dealing with everyday life.

Mufuka writes:

European scholars, coming from an industrial society, were unanimous in the belief that [the Great Zimbabwe state]... could not have been organised, except on the basis of a class society... T.N. Huffman says that "the stone complexes were probably occupied only by the nobility... and those that did almost certainly enjoyed a special status" [1976: 41]. Another European scholar wrote that the Great Zimbabwe in essence was the residence of a ruling class at the heart of the city surrounded by thousands of subjects. "They symbolise, in permanent and obvious fashion, the achievements of a ruling class" [this is Garlake 1982: 26].

However, Mufuka writes: "Though the potential for a feudalistic neo-capitalist state was there, the Zimbabwe state never achieved that level. The transition from co-operative ownership to personal ownership which would allow the king to disburse funds on a personal level was never achieved". While the king "did accumulate political and social authority above everybody else... Below him was an almost equal society" (31). Mufuka develops this theme by describing a custom whereby visitors to the king would bring gifts, as a sign of courtesy and respect: "Each day the king received very many gifts from those wishing to do business with him, the Moors, the merchants, chiefs and others". Those that could not afford rich gifts would be no less esteemed for the gift of "a sack of earth or some thatching straw" (30). Mufuka comments that this "is a witness to the African social genius" (30).

In return for these gifts "the king provided food for all the hangers-on at his court... [and] Travellers actually made a detour in order to obtain free food, shelter and supplies at the king's court" (31). Here Mufuka comments: "This was a socialistic

spirit at its best. It is amazing that the king did not enslave those who were a burden to his treasury" (31).

Even more interesting are the passages describing everyday life at Great Zimbabwe. He begins: "Our purpose in this chapter is to show how despite all the hardships associated with such monumental building, the inhabitants of Great Zimbabwe had moments of pleasure. Indeed, it is amazing how the Zimbabweans, with very little material resources were capable of infinite happiness. They had such a sense of humour that they were capable of deriving laughter from the most barren of circumstances. This is a heritage which should be the envy of the human race" (24).

In a section on celebration and dance, Mufuka writes: "There were many opportunities for merry-making, the new year and the lighting of the new fires was one occasion for dancing, the festival of first fruits when the moon died in the month of April was another... Sometimes these ceremonies lasted for a week and at the peak of the occasion each man danced according to his lights. That is the genius of Africa" (25). Or again: "This is the true genius of Africa. No opportunity and no excuse is left unutilised in providing music" (24).

The following appears in a section on religion:

the culture at Great Zimbabwe was teeming with celibates... The residential quarters of these monks and nuns were very close to the ritual enclosure on the Dzimbabwe hill. They were so small that no family could have lived in any one of the enclosures. But like John the Baptist, they were rugged men and women, fearless for no succession could be concluded without their consent, and the only source of alternative authority to the king... Deprived of all human and social intercourse, couped up in their little perches on the hill, given to prolonged religious contemplation, we are assured that they were by far the best dancers. Being also outside the pale of normal custom and law, they were capable of the most outrageous new styles of dancing as entered their heads. (28)

Clearly Mufuka's interpretation is problematic. On the one hand it is so obviously a kind of fiction - an interesting, and at times bizarre recreation of an imaginary past. On the other hand there are obvious methodological problems with his approach. The idea of using contemporary oral sources to describe twelfth century life, as Mufuka does, is extraordinarily problematic. It assumes a level of cultural stasis in African society which takes us straight back to the racist scholarship of the

nineteenth century. Here, as there, we have the positing of an African essence which acts as a guarantee of continuity in African life and history. For the former it was a spirit of unreformed barbarism, whereas for Mufuka it is an "African genius" which shines through each aspect of African history.

In fact, Mufuka's work has significant continuities with imperialist scholarship, to which it acts as a kind of foil or inverse image. One of these continuities is its absorption with upper-class life - or since Mufuka would contest the existence of social classes at Great Zimbabwe - with the monarchy. We are given detailed descriptions of the nature and character of the various monarchs. One whole chapter (out of five) is given to "Leadership and Succession". Even the descriptions of everyday life consist of the lives of commoners in relation to the monarchy. Mufuka's interpretation can be situated squarely within a tradition of writing which focuses on kings, on riches, and on exotica. This makes even more ironic Mufuka's strident criticisms of Huffman and Garlake whose revisionist accounts were a conscious departure from such a tradition, and attempts at a more "democratic" approach to the archaeology of Great Zimbabwe. Ultimately what is striking about Mufuka is the extreme conservatism, if not of his interpretation, then of his paradigm.

Mufuka sets himself up as an easy target - his work is a kind of parody of a nationalist archaeology. My intention here is not to give a point-by-point criticism of his work, but rather to use it to make a series of more general comments about the structure and nature of nationalist archaeologies. The very extremity of Mufuka's interpretation makes it useful in this regard, since the shortcomings and ideological ploys of nationalist archaeology stand all the more nakedly revealed.

In the first place, with respect to its function and intention, such writing can be understood as a form of political myth as Leonard Thompson defines it (in *The Political Mythology of Apartheid*, 1985). That is: "a tale told about the past to legitimize or discredit a regime" (1). In this case the force of Mufuka's comments about egalitarianism comes when they are set in the context of the newly independent Zimbabwe state's attempts to deal with questions of social equity and economic redistribution, and the rhetorical debt to socialism in official discourse. The ancient Zimbabwe state is claimed as a precursor of the new. As in all political myths the past becomes a mirror of the present, a place in which the present finds an image of itself as it would like to be.

At the same time in its formal characteristics, Mufuka's work - and I want to suggest, all nationalist archaeologies to a greater or lesser degree - has much in common with the structure of myth in general; in particular, myth's tendency to dehistoricise and decontextualise. There is a timeless quality to Mufuka's vignettes of life at Great Zimbabwe: the past presented as an eternal and unchanging present. His slices of life are removed from a specific historical context, immobilized and preserved as an ideal image. We have a kind of pared down past - history reduced to a single idea: egalitarianism, the triumph of African genius.

This brings me to my third comment, which is that a nationalist archaeology like Mufuka's seems to me a form of fundamentalism. There is the same fervour associated with the idea of the past. Above all, there is the same desire for a single text, or for versions of a single text, whose proper model is religion (a bible, a koran, an official history). The aim of nationalist archaeologies is closure and repetition, rather than debate and change. It seeks to solidify and canonise history, to reify it. It is the same tale told in different ways, rather than new tales or different tales. As with religious fundamentalism there is the same call on inscrutable qualities: national character, racial identity, a grand plan in the past.

There is a further point that I want to make with regard to aspects of this fundamentalism in Mufuka's work. It concerns the grounds on which he seeks to legitimate his enquiry, which are the grounds of cultural knowledge and racial identity. In the concluding section of his introduction he writes of Great Zimbabwe: "The achievements were of such a magnitude that though they primarily belong to the people of Zimbabwe, they transcend national boundaries also. They are a gift of the Shona to the world heritage". But then he continues:

And yet in returning the history of our people to themselves, we do battle with intellectual imperialism as well. *Archaeologists*, who could not speak any African languages insisted that there was no oral evidence worthwhile. Thus they arrogated to themselves the role of chief interpreters of a culture they knew miserably little about. We hope that we have delivered the first blow in the battle. (8)

The archaeologists that he has in mind are a newer generation of archaeologists to write on Great Zimbabwe - people like Huffman and Garlake, whom he singles out for criticism on these grounds in chapter two. Again there is an unintended irony in Mufuka's argument, for these are precisely the grounds on which a tradition of settler

historiography sought to defend reactionary archaeologists like R.N. Hall against "imported" specialists like MacIver and Caton Thompson. In this case it was argued that Hall - unlike MacIver and Caton Thompson - "knew the natives", and consequently knew that they could not have built Great Zimbabwe.

The importance of this point lies in the fact that similar appeals to cultural knowledge and racial identity as a means of legitimating academic knowledge are to be found in a ferocious series of debates currently doing the rounds in South African political and intellectual life. Besides the obvious comment about the jockeying for position and prestige implicit in such a strategy, the comment that I want to make is that at the centre of such appeals lies a pre- or even an anti-Enlightenment conception of knowledge. It regards knowledge as something inbred, or revealed through inscrutable processes tied to notions of identity - rather than as something which is learned or discovered. The proper name for such a position, as I have suggested, is a form of fundamentalism.

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There are two ideas that I want to stress in re-thinking the notion of nationalism in relation to archaeology. The first is the idea of a multiplicity of meanings and interpretations in the past. If the aim of a nationalist archaeology is closure - containing the archaeological past within a single master-narrative - then a post-colonial archaeology needs to be open to multiple interpretations, to provide space for contradiction, conflict and debate. Its job is to open-up the past to competing knowledge claims, to place these claims in conversation, and to explore their points of confluence and departure. The kind of nationalism which it supports is an open-ended one with space for multiple allegiances and multiple levels of identity - which defines itself through the manner of its inclusiveness, rather than through exclusion. And if this sounds like an impossibly contradictory project, then I want to suggest that this is exactly the kind of transformation around the notion of nationalism which we see being worked out in practice in a post-apartheid South Africa. I would understand the success or failure of this enterprise, and the historical process by which its contradictions are realised or accommodated, to constitute Eagleton's notion of the working "through" of the idea of nationalism.

The second idea, which functions as a necessary corrective to the first, is Hodder's notion of a "guarded" objectivity in interpretations of the past (1991). What Hodder argues for is a median position, somewhere between the relativism of some post-structuralist positions in post-processual archaeology, and the positivism of the New Archaeology. While it is true that the past only acquires meaning in the present, the past also pre-exists the present, and in a sense exists independently of the present - as a set of objects, inferences and narratives. Ultimately one is pulled-up against the reality (the [mate]reality) of the archaeological evidence itself. It is this which places Mufuka's work beyond the pale - not that his politics are good or bad, but that his interpretation bears only the most tenuous relation to the archaeological data.

Finally, I want to suggest, one is taken back to the notion of "truth", that dangerous but necessary notion. The efficacy of archaeological history in bringing about the effects which I have described - a rehabilitation of the self, its potential as a point of national identity and integration - does not depend on positing some spurious golden age in the past. The mere existence of a past to which one can lay some kind of claim - with all of its contradictions and disappointments - and the knowledge of that actuality, is enough to bring this about. So that ultimately one is taken back to the contexts which I began by describing: the red drapes and the stage, Archbishop Tutu, and the witness speaking into the microphone. For this is the deeper reasoning implicit in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission: that the truth has value in its own terms; that we need to deal honestly with the past before we can progress into the future.

In this regard, the idea that one encounters again and again in Africanist writing on the social value of the past is the notion of the past as a point of reference - a point from which to construct meanings and identities over and against those meanings and identities supplied by colonialism. The point about notions like nationhood, culture and identity is that they have a kind of provisional, situational truth, which can be liberating and empowering rather than simply misleading and oppressive. The task of a post-colonial archaeology in recognising this is to seek to engage with such notions, to point out their ambiguities and contradictions, and where appropriate and in however guarded a fashion, to support them. To my mind it is this which makes Fanon's work so valuable - that it could combine an acute awareness of the pitfalls of national consciousness, with a rousing affirmation of its value.

There is a formulation of Ngugi's which in its modesty, and in the straight-forward nature of its claim, perfectly sums up the position towards which I have been working. In an essay called "The Quest for Relevance" (1986) he writes of that "which immediately underlies the politics of language in African literature": that is, "the search for a liberating perspective within which to see ourselves clearly in relationship to ourselves and to other selves in the universe" (87). Finally, the social value of the archaeological past in relation to notions of nationalism and identity lies in its potential to do exactly that.

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II. Post-Script on Memory.

More recently this conjunction between individual and social histories, and between the consciousness of the self and that of the collectivity, has been explored in terms of the idea of memory. In the final part of this chapter I want to comment briefly on the idea of memory in relation to archaeology and the question of social value. I shall do this with regard to an area of Cape Town which achieved notoriety in the late 1960s and 1970s as the target of government forced removals, and where the forces of memory have been powerfully present ever since, the so-called District Six. But first I need to explore the notion of memory as it has appeared in some recent writing on the subject. I have taken two works for discussion, the first a recent volume to appear on the topic of memory and history, and the second an essay from the *New Left Review*.

The Thematics of Memory.

In their introduction to *Memory and History in Twentieth-Century Australia* (1994) Kate Darian-Smith and Paula Hamilton write that it is not so much history, as memory, which embodies the force of the past¹⁸. They write:

¹⁸. Paula Hamilton documents the resurgence of memory as a topic of academic discussion. In a paper called "The Knife Edge: Debates about Memory and History" (1994), she writes: "Contemporary societies seem obsessed by remembering. It has become a topic of great interest at the end of the twentieth century, as it was at the

Memories link us to place, to time and to nation: they enable us to place value on our individual and our social experiences, and they enable us to inhabit our own country. Shared memories can provide a social cohesion - but they are also a source of great conflict. (1)

They make an important distinction between memory as an individual act, versus social or collective rememberings. What is striking, however, is their cross-cutting nature:

As we share those memories that are perceived to be relevant to our own identity, we are also incorporating a memory of events which are outside our lived experiences but are deemed to be central to the identity of our society. (1)

They write of the social importance of collective memories: "It is through these collective - and indeed imaginative - memories that we structure our world and understand our past" (2). Importantly:

Collective memories are both reflected and reinforced through culturally and temporally specific activities and behaviour, such as rituals, commemorative ceremonies and bodily practices. (2)

These may take the form of traditions (or as Eric Hobsbawm would have it, "invented traditions"), which the authors further specify as "prescribed and repeated forms of behaviour, often of a symbolic nature, which derive their social authority by claiming to be descended from a suitably identifiable past" (2). They give the example of Anzac Day parades, and collective memories around Australia's participation in the two World Wars.

Darian-Smith and Hamilton note of the colonial settlement of Australia that: "New memories needed to be forged for the continent to be inscribed by white history" (3). This settlement was itself an act of memory:

European naming and mapping of the zoological, botanical and geographical features of the land was itself an act of remembrance, self-consciously etching the social and natural worlds of Europe onto a new landscape. (3)

end of the nineteenth and early twentieth, when Freud, Bergson and later Halwachs, Proust, and Bartlett were all writing" (10).

But it was also an act of "erasure", of the negation of memory, which took the form of "a deliberate non-recognition and a deletion of the existing Aboriginal history and inscription of the land" (3). In these terms, colonial conflicts over land and resources, and the subsequent conflicts around decolonisation, translate into a battle for the control not so much of history, as memory itself¹⁹.

The most suggestive account of the themes of memory and national identity which I have yet encountered is a paper by Dubravka Ugresic published in the *New Left Review* (1995) under the title of "The Confiscation of Memory". Ugresic describes the destruction of Yugoslavian national identity with the break-up of the former Yugoslav state, and its replacement by the various local nationalisms: Serb, Croat, Bosnian. Part of this process has been the "confiscation" of memory": "for many inhabitants of former Yugoslavia, along with the war and the disappearance of their country, many other things have been confiscated: not only their homeland and their possessions but also their memory" (32). She describes the citizens of the former Yugoslavia as finding themselves "in the situation of having two lives and one biography" (34) - one life in multinational Yugoslavia, with its particular memories, its particular irretrievable texture; and another life in the warring post-communist statelets. Slobodan Milosevic ("the first "player" in the Yugoslav game of destruction") has "confiscated the symbolic territory of possible community" (37).

There are some wonderful passages. On the notion of community, for example:

As I travelled, I discovered that my American, Dutch, English friends and I easily talked about all kinds of things - about books and exhibitions, about films and culture, about politics and everyday life - but in the end there is always a bit of space that cannot be shared, a bit of life that cannot be translated, an experience which marked the shared life in a particular country,

¹⁹. There has recently appeared a volume on the topic of memory in South Africa, edited by Sarah Nutall and Carli Coetzee (*Negotiating the past: The making of memory in South Africa*, 1998). It includes essays by Njabulo Ndebele, Andre Brink and Martin Hall, among others. Hall's essay, "Earth and stone: archaeology as memory", in particular, explores the conjunction between archaeology and memory. He asks: "How are objects used to create traces through time - giving substance to memory?". He writes: "I want to show that objects have an elusive quality - a polyvalency of meaning which allows them to carry different meanings for different people at the same time. This quality gives objects... potency in the construction of memory" (182).

in a particular culture, in a particular system, at a particular historical moment.... That unknown space in us is something like a shared "childhood", the warm territory of communality of a group of people, a space reserved for future nostalgia. Particularly if it should happen that this space is violently taken from us. (28)

Or, on the surfeit of history from which Europe suffers:

Today Europe rummages through drawers of memories, particularly those which contain the traumatic files of the First World War, the Second World War, fascism and communism. This feverish activity, connected with remembering, may have its origin in the fear of the possibility of forgetting. At this moment, Europe is concerned with repeating the process of historical guilt: the old rubbish which European countries, in the process of creating and recreating their own memory, have shoved under each other's doors, is in the process of returning to its owners.... Europe is like the Teufelsberg with its contents bubbling out. (The Teufelsberg is the highest hill in Berlin, under its grassy surface lie millions of tons of Berlin ruins piled up after the Second World War). Old souvenirs which had previously surfaced - flags, relics, red and yellow stars, and black swastikas - are joined by new, still warm grenades, bullets and bombs freshly arrived from Bosnia. (31)

She writes of the politics of collective memory: "collective memory can be erased and rewritten, deconstructed, constructed and reconstructed, confiscated and reconfiscated, proclaimed politically correct or incorrect... The political battle is a battle for the territory of collective memory" (34). Of nostalgia, she writes:

What stimulates nostalgia, that prick of indistinct emotion, is just as complex as the topography of our memory.... Nostalgia is not subject to control, it is a subversive activity of our brain. It works with fragments, scents, touch, sound, melody, colour, its territory is absence, is the capricious corrective to adaptable memory. (36)

One passage suggests an archaeology of memory:

Nameless ex-Yugoslav refugees scattered over all the countries and continents, have taken with them in their refugee bundles senseless souvenirs which nobody needs - a line of verse, an image, a scene, a tune, a tone, a word. In the same bundle of memory jostle fragments of past reality, which can never be put back together, and scenes of war horrors. It is hard for their owners to communicate all these shattered fragments to anyone, and with time they wrap themselves into a knot of untranslatable, enduring, soundless

distress. Those who stayed and preserved a roof over their heads will adapt more quickly, will learn the words of the new times and forget the old. (36)²⁰

Ugresic's paper is pervaded by a sense of the melancholy fate of the former Yugoslavia, that in the moment of its freedom it should self-destruct. She reports that the word "Atlantis", which refers to the myth of the disappearance of a country punished by the gods "erupted as a metaphor for Yugoslavia with the eruption of the war" (38). In a key concluding passage, she writes:

The past must be articulated in order to become memory. The citizens of Yugoslavia have been deprived of their common past. That past will probably never have a chance to be articulated into a harmonious collective memory, but it will still be hard to erase as it came to life naturally, just as everyday life comes to life.... So our story slips away in the opposite direction and instead of being about remembering it becomes a story about forgetting. As usual, things sink into oblivion, as Atlantis sank into the sea. (39)

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Archaeology and Memory in District Six.

Deborah Hart begins her essay called "Political Manipulation of Urban Space: The Razing of District Six, Cape Town" (1990) with the following evocation:

For a kilometre or more the main route from Cape Town's southern suburbs to the city's heart skirts a strikingly peculiar landscape. Between the imposing Devil's Peak and the shores of the Atlantic Ocean stretch several hectares of mostly barren, rubble-strewn red earth. A closer inspection reveals the disintegrating remnants of cobbled and gravel roads, isolated churches and mosques, and a row or two of quaint, white-washed Victorian cottages. The

20. In fact, Ugresic began a project of collecting "mental souvenirs" of life in the former Yugoslavia: "I was interested in knowing whether it was possible to identify a common corpus of emotional *topoi* in our memory. The meagre "material" I collected proves that such research is impossible. Predrag Dojcinovic, a poet and essayist who lives in Amsterdam exile, contributed his "souvenir", a description of the wrapping on "Buco" cheese, a little square of processed cheese with the hideous portrait of a fat boy on the wrapping". This experiment suggests "not only the capriciousness of nostalgia but also its "untranslatability" into other cultures, in other words the exclusivity of collective memory, its absolute copyright" (36).

periphery of the forlorn, solemn scene presents a spectacle of cranes, concrete, and construction activity. (118)

This is District Six, an area which holds a special place in the geography and mythology of my home city²¹. The origins of District Six lie in the nineteenth century in the processes of urbanization, and the growth of Cape Town as a colonial entrepot. Vivian Bickford-Smith (1990) reports that in 1840 Cape Town was a small town with a population around 20 000. By century's end the population had grown to 140 000, largely as a result of the commercial opportunities associated with the export first of wool and ostrich feathers, later of diamonds and gold. In the 1840s and 1850s the inhabitants of the area that came to be known as District Six represented virtually the whole range of contemporary Cape Town society²². They ranged from merchants "through artisans, tradesmen, domestic servants and labourers to prostitutes". Bickford-Smith writes: "As was the case with other parts of the town... the wealthy had yet to clearly establish geographical distance between themselves and the less wealthy, to symbolize and stress their social distance from the lower classes" (36). With the development of railway and tramway networks in the 1860s and 1870s, those who could afford to removed themselves to villas in the Gardens, the Southern Suburbs, and Green Point and Sea Point. By 1900 the part of Cape Town from the Castle through to Observatory, including District Six, was recognisably lower class.

Bickford-Smith writes of the poverty of District Six. It was not unusual for a single small room to be occupied by twenty people. Clean water was hard to come by, and no provision was made for the organised disposal of sewerage. The District was visited by smallpox, and in 1901 by Bubonic Plague²³. But he also writes of the

21. Martin Hall has since written independently on the topic of archaeology and memory at District Six (see "Cape Town's District Six and the Archaeology of Memory", presented to the World Archaeological Congress: Intercongress on the Destruction and Conservation of Cultural Property, Croatia, May 1998). This was somewhat after I had written the above, but before he had read my work. There are interesting convergences between the two pieces, particularly in their use of sources (Vivian Bickford-Smith, Deborah Hart, Crain Soudien, Richard Rive, Alex La Guma), but also in the attention which they give to the work of Sue Williamson.

22. Previously known as Kanaladorp, the District received its present name in the Municipal Act of 1867 which redivided the old Municipality of Cape Town into six districts, each of which was to elect three representatives to the Council.

23. One of the more diverting features of municipal politics in late nineteenth century Cape Town was the by-play between the so-called "Clean Party" representative of

vibrancy and heterogeneity of District Six. It was "arguably, one of the most cosmopolitan areas in the Cape, if not the whole of sub-Saharan Africa" (43). The largest component of its inhabitants were people whom the Cape Government referred to variously as "Malay", "Mixed and Other" or "Coloured" - that is, Capetonians of darkish pigmentation who were descendants of slaves, or the commingling of Khoi, Africans who spoke Bantu languages, and colonists from Europe and their descendants. The District also housed large numbers of recent immigrants from Britain, several thousand Jews from Tsarist Russia, and several more thousand Mfengu, Gcaleka and Gaika from the Eastern Cape.

However, even more important than the fact of this heterogeneity was the extent of cultural imbrication, and the cross-cutting nature of lines of race, class, ethnicity and religion. Hart (1990: 122) quotes from the poet and novelist Breyten Breytenbach in describing the "crazy architecture" of District Six, which exuded "unity in diversity, a confused and disorganised abstraction of rusted roofs, turrets, minarets, towers, arches, ornate facades, and Gothic spires dazzl[ing] in their variety and colour" (*The Spirit of District Six*, 1970: 6). Alex La Guma paints an evening scene in Hanover Street:

Up ahead the music shops were still going full blast, the blare of records all mixed up so you could not tell one tune from another. Shopkeepers, Jewish, Indian, and Greek, stood in doorways along the arcade of stores on each side of the street, waiting to welcome last-minute customers; and the vegetable and fruit barrows were still out too, the hawkers in white coats yelling their wares and flapping their brown-paper packets, bringing prices down now that the day was ending. (La Guma 1962: 7, in Hart 1990: 122)²⁴

In another passage Hart paraphrases Richard Rive in describing District Six as "a paradox of warmth and variety, dirt and rubble, gaiety and sadness" (122). Bickford-Smith has been rightly critical of a "melting-pot" mythology of District Six ("It would be naive... to assume that District Six at the turn of the century was one happy melting pot" 1990: 37). He points to the significant divisions in the community, and the informal "hierarchy of pigmentation" in operation. Nevertheless, he writes: "What

merchant interests, and the "Dirty Party" representative of landlord interests, which was criticised for refusing to spend money on sanitation and water-supply. Bickford-Smith notes that the advent of the Cleans did nothing to markedly improve conditions in District Six.

²⁴. The La Guma reference is a novel called *A Walk in the Night* (Ibadan: Mbari).

needs to be stressed is that there were countervailing tendencies in this community that saw sometimes class prevailing over ethnicity in terms of a person's sense of identity, sometimes ethnicity over class" (38). In this respect District Six held much in common with the racially heterogeneous area of Sophiatown in Johannesburg, an area with which it was to share the same ultimate fate:

The razing of District Six was completed over the course of two decades. In February 1966 the greater part of District Six was formally proclaimed an area for white settlement in terms of the provisions of the Group Areas Act of 1950. Its inhabitants "were granted one year in which to prepare for the implementation of apartheid's grand design to remove them from the city's core to its distant periphery" (Hart 1990: 124). At the time this was euphemistically described as a scheme for "urban renewal". Crain Soudien (1990) has described it more straightforwardly as a "process of bleaching":

Urban areas where people of colour traditionally lived were decreed white; the buildings, structures and even roads which conditioned their upbringing were systematically erased and new characters, carrying the unmistakable National Party stamp, were imposed on old and often hallowed ground. (144)

The most famous victims of this process were District Six, South End in Port Elizabeth, and Vrededorp and Sophiatown in Johannesburg, but it affected literally hundreds of urban communities including many in the greater Cape Town area. The inhabitants of District Six were removed to the newly constructed "suburbs" of Rylands Estate, Belhar Township, and the cynically named Hanover Park²⁵. Estimates of the total number of people moved in the fifteen years following the initial announcement of the District's pending "white group" status vary from 55 000 to 65 000²⁶.

25. See Hart (1990). Hart quotes Rive who writes of Hanover Park that it was named "with malicious sarcasm" after District Six's treasured main street (*Writing Black*, 1981:4).

26. The initial estimate of the number of people in District Six in 1966 stood at 33 500. The discrepancy between these estimates is explained in part by the continual flow of people into the area precipitated by the lack of alternative accommodation, and by the number of so-called illegal dwellers not officially enumerated during the government census-taking (Hart 1990).

Resistance to the removals was immediate and sustained. Hart (1990) writes that: "The magnitude of opposition to the clearance of District Six is unequalled in the history of urban resettlement in urban South Africa" (134); a point underlined by Soudien ("District Six: From Protest to Protest", 1990). Initially this resistance was conducted through organisations like the District Six Defence Committee and the District Six Association; and later through the Friends of District Six and the District Six Rent, Rates and Residents Association. Individuals like Fr. Basil van Rensburg, parish priest at the Holy Cross Catholic Church in Nile Street, distinguished themselves in the struggle against the removals.

A feature of these campaigns was their failure to stop the government from carrying through their plans, although they won some important local victories. For example, in September 1979 the District Six Rent, Rates and Residents Association brought a legal suit against the Department of Community Development - whose naming is one of those Orwellianisms in which South Africa abounds - challenging the legality of eviction procedures, which they won²⁷. A second feature was the low level of working class organisation within the District - the fact that, as Soudien (1990) puts it, "struggles appear to have been conducted on behalf of the community instead of by the community itself" (143). As removals and the process of demolition became facts, various commentators described a new mood of resignation and despair²⁸. Soudien writes of the inhabitants of District Six:

By the early seventies the removal process and the arrival of that symbol of "white" domination and insensitivity - the bulldozer - had become established facts of their day to day existence. Physically their world was manifesting advanced signs of a form of social gangrene. The closing and demolition of key landmarks such as the Wash-house in Hanover Street, the fire razing the Star cinema and the movement of over 10 000 people from the area slowly eroded the sense of community which District Six once possessed. (1990: 155).

27. This was the so-called Samsodien Test Case (Soudien 1990).

28. Soudien quotes the observation of a Miss Sandra McGregor, who he describes as a District Six *kenner* - someone familiar with the area - that in June 1968 "a tremendous change [had taken place] in the atmosphere since the group areas proclamation today it's like painting a dying world... a destroyed soul. There is still a lot of laughter there, but if one looks below the surface, one finds only misery and sickness" (*Argus* 28 June 1968, in Soudien 1990: 154).

A more successful campaign of resistance has focussed around the planned redevelopment of District Six as a residential area for middle-income whites. Hart (1990) reports that the Friends of District Six Committee was notably effective in dissuading members of the public from implicating themselves in the seizure of the area through buying "tarnished" property. Tactics of the Friends included the distribution of sachets of consecrated soil from bulldozed areas to parishes overseas. More recently 23 organizations banded together to form a "Hands Off District Six" campaign in response to a plan by British Petroleum (Southern Africa) for the private sector redevelopment of District Six. Their guiding intention was that District Six be declared "salted earth" and left undeveloped until the demise of apartheid. Less successful was the campaign to halt the construction of a white technical college. The 17 hectare site of the Cape Technicon now sprawls across the Western boundary of the former District Six.

Of all the themes which emerge from the story of District Six, the one that I want to dwell on is the theme of emptiness. In the first place there is the notion of emptiness as it applies to a landscape which has been vandalized and destroyed. Richard Dudley ("Forced Removals - the Essential Meanings of District Six", 1990) writes that: "Today the bare, scarred earth, and the hate and anger which its destruction generated have created a special kind of monument" (197). It is a landscape which "is evidence of [the government's]... inability to build a civilization" (198). In this District Six is part of the wider tragedy of South Africa, that it should have been in the hands of rulers who had a talent only for destruction. In the second place the notion of emptiness applies to an emptiness of the spirit. Hart writes that: "The inconvenience occasioned by the physical wrenching of people from long-time homes pales in the face of more prolonged and damaging psychological distress". She writes: "Oral evidence, literary accounts, and almost two decades of newspaper reporting unite in their testimony to the fear, humiliation, bitterness, and anger that accompanied the displacement". Not least among the consequences was "fragmentation of the identity and heritage of a particular community" (128). Again, in this District Six highlights the particular plight of South Africans everywhere: the fragmentation of identity, the confiscation of heritage.

Like Ugresic's Yugoslavia District Six has ceased to exist. What remains are the bare bones, the merest traces, and it is here that I want to return to my twin themes of archaeology and memory. For what remains of District Six exists in two forms: it exists as an archaeological residue, as a rich and overlapping series of

archaeological sites. And it exists in memory - in the narratives, images and remembrances of the people who dwelt there. Archaeology and memory: the two places where the bulldozers could not reach. And, as for Ugresic, the processes of archaeology and memory are not so very different. In both there is loss and suppression. In both there is the patient work of discovery, and the shock of hidden contents brought suddenly to light. In the same vein, the objects of archaeology might be thought to function as the objects of memory, and visa versa. Sigmund Freud famously recognized the conjunction between archaeology and memory in his frequent use of metaphors drawn from archaeology to describe the process of psychoanalysis.

More recently, District Six has become the object of professional archaeological interest under the auspices of the Research Unit for the Archaeology of Cape Town (RESUNACT). Initial excavations were undertaken by the Archaeology Contracts Office (ACO) of the University of Cape Town, and these have since been broadened in terms of a research programme focussed on nineteenth-century Cape Town (Hall 1994, Hart and Halkett 1996). However, as a way of exploring the conjunction between archaeology and memory at District Six I want to turn to the different, though related, domain of art, to consider a singular installation by the Cape Town artist Sue Williamson, a figure long associated with the iconography of anti-apartheid struggle. At the time of the installation (in March 1993) I wrote a review which I called "Sue Williamson's Archaeology"²⁹. The first part of the review gives the background to the work. I wrote:

How as an artist does one approach an event like the destruction of District Six? How does one express a sufficient degree of moral outrage at an event which still wounds, which continues to confront us as we drive into the city. By all accounts what was happening in District Six was something original in South African life and culture, a glimpse of what might have been - and it is this which has been destroyed so completely beyond recall. District Six grew in the interstices of colonial life, it was anti-bureaucratic, disestablishment from the start. It was shaped by a different set of pressures, the kind which today we preface with the term "people's" - people's education, people's parks. Its heterodoxy threatened the small men of apartheid with their civil-service minds, and so it had to go. The sense of community is a strange thing, and

²⁹. The review was commissioned by a small independent publication called the *Vrye Weekblad*. Problems with the scheduling of articles, however, meant that it was never published.

once it has been smashed like that no amount of careful management can bring it back.

In her installation, which she poignantly entitled "The Last Supper Revisited", Williamson approached the life and destruction of District Six via its material remains - potsherds, fragments of glass, scraps of iron and fabric, a hair-clip - which she collected from among the rubble and weeds on the now eerily deserted slopes above the Castle. These she mounted in small blocks of clear resin - like prehistoric insects fixed in amber - and lit strategically from below. They confronted you as you entered the room in which the installation was assembled in Cape Town's Irma Stern Museum like so many radiant miniatures, each with its extravagant jewel: a scrap of panty-hose or a doll's shoe. The centre-piece of the installation was a circular glass-topped table with resin miniatures arranged across its surface. The glass was blacked-out except for a space beneath each resin block through which light gleamed. Shrouded stools surrounded the table and drapes were hung across the windows and doors. A tape-machine sent recordings of domestic interiors, kitchen sounds, into the hot, reverential gloom - authentic sounds to accompany the authentic objects in their resin. This then was the scene of the last supper, taken in the roar of the bulldozers, and so strikingly recalled for us through its left-overs.

It seemed to me that what was significant about the exhibition was Sue Williamson's reluctance to intervene artistically between her materials and the viewer. In a previous pass at the same topic she used the exhibition space of a Long Street gallery to dump a load of rubble and found objects from District Six. People were invited to donate what they could to cart home a brick. This was in 1981, in the terminal stages of the quarter's distress. Then, as in the later exhibition, the implication was clear - the objects should be allowed to speak for themselves as their own most eloquent testimony. All of the interest, all of the hold of the installation came from the objects. Williamson's scraps were really there, touched by the hands of those who lived there, part of the texture of everyday life - and it is this sense of authenticity which gives them their power and excitement. Any manipulation of the objects was carried out in this former life. I wrote: "Sue Williamson has interpreted her role as a kind of curatorship, to present, to display, to witness in clear resin and light".

This led me to question some of the aesthetic conventions which informed Williamson's approach. Behind her apparently neutral act of presentation, I

suggested, lay an act of representation. Her objects had been carefully selected and displayed. The hushed atmosphere and strategic lighting were enough to arouse the critical instincts of any archaeologist or museologist. In place of the glass cases we had the resin blocks within which the objects gleam. By removing them from their original context and displaying them in this way these artefacts had been reborn under the sign of the art object. Technically, the name for what Sue Williamson had done is bad archaeology. By collecting these objects with only the most general note of their provenience she had destroyed much of their archaeological value. Her excuse is that the objects should be allowed to speak for themselves, but as archaeologists we know that they never do this. And this, finally, was the problem with her installation, that it fell somewhere between archaeology and art: "Without the attention to context and the powers of historical narrative of archaeology, and without the idiosyncratic reworking, the breath of sublimity, of art"³⁰.

The value of Sue Williamson's work is that she uncovers a potential in archaeology which is not usually recognized - the potential to intervene in the processes of memory. Ultimately what guided her was the desire to *re-member*, to forcefully recall the fate of District Six in much the same way as Skotnes was moved to remember the sad fate of the San, or the Truth Commission is presently turning over the soil of past injuries and injustices. Of course, what I suggested with regard to Williamson's installation is that to remember is also to rework (to *dis-member*?).

The themes which emerge for a post-colonial archaeology are no less compelling than the earlier themes of nationalism, identity and consciousness. Archaeological sites themselves become the sites of memory, just as the physical act of excavation becomes a way of engaging with these processes. Archaeology becomes a process through which memory is recalled, reworked and recapitulated. It draws on the inherently evocative qualities of material objects in making the kinds of associations which bind us to particular identities and particular histories. When archaeologists sift through the sacred soil of District Six they are willy-nilly drawn into the territory of memory, identity and consciousness for the people whose histories and whose former selves lie buried in that abandoned landscape.

³⁰. Sue Williamson's installation was taken to the Venice Biennale in 1993 as part of the South African exhibit. For another description of the installation see Benita Munitz's review in the *Cape Times* (12 March 1993).

By all accounts, what was lost at District Six was something irreplaceably precious - a glimpse of a uniquely South African identity constructed out of a diversity of race, culture and experience. This kind of syncretic, local identity had just begun to take root in South Africa's urban spaces, when it was so ruthlessly stamped out. It is a measure of the time lost to apartheid that in a post-apartheid South Africa we are presently trying to rediscover similar forms of identity and association (although, it would seem, in an altogether less innocent form).

Ugresic concludes her story of Yugoslavia by taking her "tale of collective memory back to the very beginning, to Cicero who, in *De Oratore* tells the story of the poet, Simonides of Ceos, the "inventor" of memory" (1996: 38), which is at the same time an archaeological story of unearthing. The story goes that a nobleman of Thessaly named Scopas invited Simonides to a banquet at his palace so that he could write a poem in honour of the host. In the middle of the banquet Simonides receives a message that someone is looking for him - he gets up and leaves the palace. While he is outside the ceiling suddenly collapses, killing the host and his guests. The sad work of disintering begins, but the bodies are so crushed by the rubble that they cannot be identified. However, Simonides, who survived, remembers where each one had been sitting at the table. The story says that thanks to Simonides, the inventor of memory, the relatives are able to take away their dead for decent burial.

CHAPTER 5

ARCHAEOLOGY AND EDUCATION

How does one unbury a buried past? How does one rehabilitate history?

In this chapter I extend my exploration of the topic of archaeology and social value by reporting on the work of a public archaeology project called the Archaeology Workshop (AW), which I founded in late 1990. The project focussed on school-children, teachers and trainee-teachers from local schools in the Cape peninsula; particularly those from historically and educationally disadvantaged backgrounds. In practice this meant schools which fell under the Department of Education and Culture (DEC), and the Department of Education and Training (DET); which catered for, respectively, Coloured and black children under the apartheid system of education.

I began the Workshop out of a perception of need, because of the neglect of the archaeological past in school history textbooks and in the classroom. Here was a chance to do something useful with the knowledge and skills which I had acquired. At the same time student politics were in a state of suspension as the process of political negotiation got underway - it was a period in which events were decided on high, and apparently at a great distance. It seemed like a good time to focus on the local and the particular. However, the usefulness of the work of the AW soon became apparent, as a practical adjunct to the theoretical inquiry which I had begun. The Workshop became a kind of laboratory, in which ideas could be set in motion, in which I could observe at first hand the effects of which I had read: the alienation of pre-colonial history; internalised oppression; the peculiar power of the material past. At the same time, the work of the AW seemed to me a further indispensable stage in the process of the production of knowledge: that stage at which knowledge takes on a public life, and becomes common cultural property. The experience of working in the Workshop made the connection for me between a theoretical critique of archaeological theory and practice, and the realm of public and popular consciousness of the past. That is to say, it actualised in immediate and concrete ways the challenging notion of "unburying" a buried past.

But let me begin by sketching a scene which, looking back, seems to me typical of the activities of the AW. This is a scene, I want to suggest, in which one witnesses a number of conjunctions: the legacy of apartheid in education; the imprint of oppression on consciousness; and the potentially transformative power of the archaeological past.

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The bus made its slow way along the roads skirting the mountainous spine of the southern peninsula. Its destination was marked by a grassy patch at the base of some dunes on the outskirts of Fish Hoek, a small coastal town. Fifty children climbed down from the bus, accompanied by their form teacher and two archaeologists. Each child carried worksheets, a pen and a water-bottle. There was an air of excitement among them - here they were on a normal school day, dressed in old clothes and sneakers, about to walk to the cave which they could see on the mountain high above them. Moreover, the archaeologists, although clearly in the same age-range as their teacher, insisted on none of the usual formalities found in schools. They introduced themselves by their first names and were relaxed and chatty.

After a short talk by the archaeologists (take care walking on the dunes; respect the integrity of the site which you are about to visit), they set off. From above one would see a line of children winding across the dunes, an archaeologist at the head and at the tail. There are frequent stops for questions and discussion. Inevitably there are small excitements and alarms: a stream which has come down in spate and which needs to be forded; a section of the path washed away in the winter rains. At the cave which is a large one, bigger than their classroom at school, they begin a programme of group activities, games and discussions. The group activities might include stone knapping, play acting, and a careful tour of the cave, pausing to examine each of its features.

The subject is the long history of human evolution, and human social and technological development (some of which was played out right here at this site!), and the dynamic social landscape which preceded colonialism. Much of this is new to the children, whose history textbooks still give the impression that

the history of South Africa began in 1652 with the establishment of the first permanent European settlement. There is a sense of discovery associated with the uncovering of hidden pasts, and there is a sense of wonder at the physical connection of the site to those pasts. Later they will visit two further sites, both of them on the sea's edge - one on the Indian Ocean and one on the Atlantic Ocean - and this sense of wonder will grow.

As the day progresses the archaeologists step into the background. They encourage the children to take the role of presenters themselves - to report back, to lead discussion, even to argue about specific interpretations of the past. Their teacher has follow-up assignments and assessment forms, so that these discussions will continue in class. At the end of the day, tired, dirty, like no other school day they can remember, the bus drops them back in their school yard.

In the chapter that follows I begin by reviewing the effects of apartheid on history education in South Africa. The second part of the chapter describes the programmes of the Archaeology Workshop. It is divided into two sections, the first is given to the field excursion programme, and the second to the Teachers' Workshop. The chapter concludes with a section headed "Discussion and Comments" in which I discuss the notion of a "People's Archaeology", and the work of a public education project in Toronto, Canada, called the Archaeological Resource Centre.

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Review - Apartheid and History Education in South Africa. Black History; White-lies.

There are a number of general accounts reviewing the effects of apartheid on history education in South Africa. The most useful of these remains a work by Elizabeth Dean, Paul Hartmann and Mary Katzen called *History in black and white; an analysis of South African school history textbooks* (1983). The authors give their conception of the role of the past in the present: "Our concern is with the potential of history teaching to shape the consciousness of whole

generations by providing them with a set of shared concepts and understandings about the past that may form the basis of collectively taken-for-granted assumptions about present-day society and politics" (19). They regard history teaching as "one among many interlocking institutionalized cultural forces in South African society" (19). At the same time they recognize something of the flexibility of apartheid ideology. They write: "The ideology of apartheid has many variants which command varying degrees of credibility in different sections of the South African population at different times" (19). However, at its heart lie two invariants: the notion of white superiority; and the need to maintain the separation between the races.

The authors write of a "white-centred approach to history": "Pre-colonial Africa is virtually ignored... The South African history in the textbooks is predominantly a history of the white groups in South Africa; very little is offered on the history of South African blacks before the arrival of the whites" (51). The general assumption of black incompetence is underpinned by a cultural evolutionist argument: "There is frequent reference to the idea of non-whites not having reached a sufficiently high "stage of development"... to enjoy full political and civil rights" (104). Along with this marginalization of the pre-colonial past, is the sidelining of "struggle" history (the history of opposition against apartheid): "Forms of black opposition to white supremacy are... either ignored or ascribed to external forces such as communism rather than to the prevailing circumstances of inequality" (83)¹.

The need to conform to a common core syllabus "ensures that history textbooks cover very much the same ground for each secondary school standard" (50). This applies equally to textbooks prepared for use in white, Indian and Coloured schools, and in the final three years in schools for black children, in which broadly the same course is followed. The authors write of the importance of history textbooks lying in the fact that "they carry the authority of print... For very

¹. Dean *et al* give a useful profile of spending on education in South Africa. At the time of writing this was characterised by "considerable inequality in the allocation of human and material resources for the education of the different population groups" (21). Using South African Institute for Race Relations (SAIRR) figures for 1981, they note that per capita expenditure on white education was almost ten times that for black education.

many pupils school history will be the only formal instruction they receive about what went before and what led up to today's world" (102). They write: "History textbooks, probably more than any other kind of school-book, have the capacity to influence the social and political thinking of whole generations" (102). In this instance they encourage "beliefs, attitudes and values that are part of the intellectual underpinning of the apartheid system" (103).

Of more direct interest are a number of accounts focussed specifically on the representation of the archaeological past in South African school history texts. The first of these, also published in 1983, is Andrew Smith's "The Hotnot Syndrome: myth-making in South African school textbooks". His study considers history textbooks published in South Africa from the beginning of the First World War to the 1980s, concentrating on their representation of "aboriginal peoples". He begins with the assumption of the selective nature of cultural memory: "Historical paradigms are conditioned by the ruling elite and their view of what is important to remember about the past" (37). Smith affirms the importance of school histories in this regard. He quotes Du Preez (*Africana Afrikaner: Master Symbols in South African School textbooks*, 1983: 10): "At school... the child is consciously exposed to a pre-selected and organized system of knowledge of values for a prolonged period, and to the symbolic system emanating from the knowledge of values" (38).

Smith notes that textbooks from the early period are characterised by the negation or denial of pre-colonial history. He quotes from a text by J.R. Fisher (*Historical Geographies: South Africa*, 1914: 20):

We can safely say that before the appearance of Europeans in South Africa the country possessed no history of its own. It was inhabited... but these inhabitants played no important part in the history of the world... being totally uncivilised. (39)

A consistent theme in these texts is the attention given to the myth of the late occupation of southern Africa by black settlers from the North, a myth which has its original in Theal's *History of South Africa, 1795-1834* (1891). It appears in textbooks from the early period (for example Fouche, 1916), through to the early 1980s (Stander and Olivier, 1980). Smith writes: "The important central thread

which appears consistently is that none of the people of South Africa are really indigenous" (41).

Textbook descriptions of the indigenous people of the Cape are usually taken directly from travellers' accounts of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, most of which are highly derogatory. A recurrent feature is the space which they give to detailed descriptions of Khoisan physical types. This from a 1933 text by Viljoen and Hartzenberg in use in coloured schools: "The Bushmen... had peppercorn hair, lobeless ears, triangular faces, almost beardless, deep-set bright eyes beneath upright foreheads, broad, flat noses..." (43). Earlier texts are informed by a kind of matter-of-fact cultural evolutionism:

The Bushmen cannot claim to possess many virtues. Their mental weakness has made them the butt of the rest of the natives. Their lowness in the human scale is only surpassed by very few races, the aborigines of Australia being one of them.

The Bushmen are slowly but surely dying out, and the fact is hardly to be deplored, as they are of little use in the world.

The Hottentots... are somewhat higher in the human scale than the Bushmen, but their intelligence is not of a very high order. (Fisher, 1914: 87-89; in Smith 1983: 43)

The most interesting aspect of Smith's study concerns an instance of internalised oppression. That is, the phenomenon whereby Coloured South Africans, some of whom can claim Khoisan descent, have been led to reject their aboriginal heritage (this is the "Hotnot Syndrome" of Smith's title). He quotes from Whisson's study of forced removals in the southern peninsula ("Using the Past - Myth and History in Simonstown", 1981: 9):

the history of the ancient Cape peoples is a history of defeat and demoralisation at the hands of the more powerful intruders. Those who have tasted the fruits of that historical process and have in turn been deprived of their rights to live freely throughout the Peninsula find nothing to inspire them in that small portion of their ancestry and have duly forgotten it. (44-45)

The echoes of Biko, and before that Fanon, are marked, and probably quite unconscious. Smith writes that "A potential resurgence of historical tradition exists in South Africa, as it has done in Australia, the United States and Canada" (47-48). Writing in 1983, however, there was little sign of such a resurgence.

Mazel and Stewart's more detailed study ("Meddling with the mind: the treatment of San hunter-gatherers and the origins of South Africa's Black population in recent South African school history textbooks") was published in 1987 in the *SAAB*. They examine a sample of 25 textbooks published since 1972. This study period was chosen to coincide with the implementation of the 1972 syllabus for standards eight, nine and ten (the final three years of secondary education); and the 1974 syllabus for standards five, six and seven. It includes the introduction of the most recent syllabus (at the time of writing) in 1984 for all of these standards. Their study is focussed on two issues: the textbooks' "treatment of the San hunter-gatherers and the origins of South Africa's Black population" (166). They are specifically interested in the extent to which the new syllabi constitute a response to allegations of bias and inaccuracies; and the extent to which they incorporate the increasing volume of archaeological research on the southern African Iron Age, which came on stream in this period.

In general the textbooks fail on both counts. The section called "The Southward Expansion of the Southern Bantu" initially formed part of the standard eight history course, where it formed part of a larger section called "Expansion and Division in Southern Africa, 1806-1854". With the implementation of the new syllabus in 1984 it was relegated to the standard six course, and the term "Bantu" was replaced by "Blacks". Texts from the earlier period emphasise the slowness and lateness of this migration, frequently citing Theal as evidence. In general: "These texts give the impression that the migrating "Bantu" arrived at the Fish River at the same time as, or shortly before, the Europeans" (167). The single exception is Boyce (1973: 136, *Legacy of the past: a history for standard 8*), who writes:

It is one of the legends in South African history that these Bantu people were newcomers to South Africa, in fact there are school books which give the impression that the Bantu arrived in South Africa about the same time as the white colonists were moving towards the eastern frontier of the Cape Colony. Recent research, however, shows that the earliest Bantu

invaders from the north may have reached Southern Africa as early as the eleventh or twelfth century AD. (167)

Strikingly, none of the texts incorporate archaeological evidence which by 1975 was already clear in placing African farming communities in parts of the Transvaal from the third and fourth centuries AD (Klapwijk 1974; Mason 1974; Prinsloo 1974; Evers 1975). Neither was the situation improved in later texts. Mazel and Stewart identify two general approaches to the material in texts from the 1984 syllabus. The first is to uncritically restate the conclusions of earlier texts. Joubert and Brits (*History for Std. 6*, 1985) write that the first "tribes" reached present-day Zimbabwe between the eighth and ninth centuries, but then cite Theal in claiming that the ancestors of the Nguni were still north of the Zambezi River in AD 1400. A second approach is to mention the early history of African farming communities, without however developing it in any detail. For example, Lambrechts *et al* (*History 5*, 1985) note that farming communities were found along the east coast of southern Africa by AD 200, but three sentences on they jump to the very much later encounter between Xhosa-speaking pastoralists and Afrikaner trekboers at the Fish River. The single exception reported by Mazel and Stewart is Nisbet *et al* (*History alive Standard 6*, 1985) - a text co-authored by Tim Maggs - which is "up-to-date with recent archaeological information and has an extensive section on the early history of the Black population" (167).

Many of the distortions reported by Smith in textbook representations of the San are present in the texts surveyed by Mazel and Stewart: the obsession with physical appearance, assertions of their primitive and childlike nature, the presumed lack of religion, and so on. Conflict between San and the Dutch settlers is mentioned in the context of reprisals against stock theft - some texts refer to "the San problem". Again, except for Nisbet *et al* and Graves and Consul (*History for standard 5*, 1985) there is no attempt to incorporate work from the considerable body of ethnographic and archaeological research on the Bushmen (the former being particularly well developed with respect to the Kalahari San).

A relative outsider view is given in an essay by Stephen Gawe and Francis Meli called "The missing Past in South African history", which was originally given as a paper at the World Archaeological Congress in Southampton in 1986. The

essay is included in a useful collection edited by Peter Stone and Robert MacKenzie, called *The Excluded Past: Archaeology in education* (1990). Gawe and Meli begin with a general account of colonialism and apartheid in South Africa, in which they follow convention in describing apartheid as "colonialism of a special type". They quote Steve Biko and Ali Mazrui on the effects of colonialism on consciousness. In a section called "The excluded past" they describe the forms which the marginalization of the archaeological past has taken. These include: the fact that archaeological research is not included in general historical accounts; the fact that archaeology is not perceived as relevant or useful; and the fact (and here one senses a personal grievance) that white control of the market for published material has made it difficult for black writers and academics to find an audience.

A final section ("Liberation through the past and future") begins with the rousing line: "The struggle surrounding the interpretation of the past is part of the struggle for liberation in South Africa" (105). However, they capture something of the conundrum of historical consciousness in South Africa when, following a discussion of hegemonic interpretations of the past, they assert that:

Our people think differently. They are called upon - and this is more relevant now than ever before - to rediscover their past traditions, to heighten their vigilance against the national degradation that plunders and cripples their culture, to close ranks in the struggle against apartheid, and to discover and map out their place in that struggle. The development of a progressive and patriotic historical consciousness and thinking is part of the struggle for economic and social emancipation from apartheid and colonialism. (106)

This is a position and an assertion for which I feel an instinctive sympathy, but is it true? Gawe and Meli were writing from exile in London, with the particular position of the exile: the combination of yearning and combativeness, and the need to state matters categorically to a foreign audience. In fact, inside the country there was little sign of a resurgence of historical consciousness in the mid-eighties (as, indeed, is the case in the mid-nineties). The job of recovering an excluded past would turn out to be both more arduous and more ambiguous.

The final work to which I want to refer is a newly published book by June Bam and Pippa Visser called *A New History for a New South Africa* (1996), which directly addresses issues connected with political transformation and the social value of the past. They begin:

The dramatic changes South Africa has been going through in recent years are exciting, but they are also complicated and confusing. All the uncertainties and insecurities that students experience tend to wind up in the classroom, where the teacher is the one who has to cope with them. Clearly this is not an easy time to be a history teacher. (1)

Rather than involving simply political and economic aspects, this transformation has social and cultural dimensions. They particularise these as:

the development of a more inclusive South African cultural life that recognises and values the rich cultural diversity of the country; the adjustments people have to make to living in a democratic society; the need to overturn the consequences of long-standing racism and sexism - indeed, all the things that go into nation-building and the creation of a truly *new* South Africa. (1)

They note that teachers are under-prepared for this task: "Much of the initial burden of shaping transformation in our society lands in the laps of teachers, and yet they are left without the facilities and back-up required to do the job" (1-2). In a key passage they ask:

Who is helping teachers to cope with transformation? Who is providing teams of educational advisers to assist schools? Where are the new detailed syllabuses and textbooks that can point teachers in the right direction? Where are the desperately needed funds to provide basic library facilities for the vast majority of schools that have none? Where are the crash-courses designed to enable teachers to improve their qualifications and bring their knowledge and teaching methods up to date? (1)

In the most interesting section of their introduction they examine the question of social value. They write: "some people, black as well as white, say that we should forget those conflicts of the past and ignore the differences in how people look at and understand our past... they say, we should focus on the future and

leave the past behind us" (2). Yet, they write: "we should remember that the past also involves efforts to sustain valuable ways of living, resistance to oppression at many levels and by people from all sections of South African society". It is these "hidden histories of the ordinary people of South Africa, who are usually excluded from history textbooks" (2). Recalling the logic which impels the Truth Commission, they write:

the main reason for insisting that we have to continue studying South African history is that it is dangerous to turn our backs on the past. Amnesia is not a cure for our problems; is just another disorder... We need to explore the past in order to identify the things that still need to change and to see what sort of redress might be required. We need to know where we have been in order to ensure that we never go there again. (2-3)

Ultimately for Bam and Visser, the value of history education lies in the manner in which it prepares students for the task of nation building. A developed sense of the past allows students to be aware and fully functioning members of society. They write: "The ability of today's students to become fully active and critically aware citizens is essential to the task of nation building that lies ahead" (6). They have a definition of nation building which I like: "we refer to nation building not only in a narrowly nationalistic sense but in the sense of creating a country in which all people can live in relative harmony as members of a single, diverse, but no longer deeply divided, society" (6).

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The Programmes of the Archaeology Workshop.

The story of the Archaeology Workshop begins with a series of meetings which I convened in late 1990 to discuss the possibility of founding a public archaeology facility based at the University of Cape Town. These meetings were open to staff and students of the Department of Archaeology, however the idea quickly took root amongst the post-graduate students, who were a group with a sufficient degree of common interest to sustain such an initiative. Some of these students

had a background in student politics or the ecology movement, and the AW seemed like a natural extension of these interests.

The active membership of the Workshop was never large. It ranged from eight members for much of 1993/4, to two or three members when volunteers were drawn away by work or travel commitments. I acted as coordinator of the Workshop for the full period of its activities. In 1993 I was joined by Natasha Erlank, at that time a Masters student in the History Department, who assisted with the day-by-day running of the Workshop and took charge of the finances. Janette Smith, a Canadian student doing post-graduate work in the archaeometry laboratory, joined us at the end of the same year; and Wendy McKeag, whom we had employed as a part-time Educational Officer in 1994, stayed on after the expiry of her contract to assist with the field excursions.

At its inception the Archaeology Workshop was envisaged as a successor to the Archaeology Awareness Workshop (AAW). The AAW was set up in 1985, in part as a response to the Gaborone meeting of the Southern African Association of Archaeologists (SA3), with the aim of publicising and popularising archaeological research. At its inception it claimed fifty members countrywide (Hall 1990), however although individual members achieved some results, the initiative as a whole stalled. With hindsight it can be said to have failed, both in achieving significant results in the field of public education, and in achieving consensus within the discipline around the need for such a programme.

Significantly, the mid-eighties - the years of the township revolts - were a period of heavy state repression. In the mean time conditions had changed. 1990 had begun with the release of Nelson Mandela and the first signs of political transformation. There was a new openness and energy in South African society, and it seemed like an auspicious time to relaunch the initiative of the AAW. The founding of the Archaeology Workshop was very much in keeping with the spirit of the times - it was seen as providing a vehicle for new ideas and new approaches, and for dealing constructively with the legacy of a divided and conflictual past. From its inception, then, the Workshop was forward-looking, self-consciously progressive, set-up in a mood of optimism and adventure.

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I. The Field Excursions

Initially the concerns of the Workshop were broad. We agitated for improved conditions of service for tutors, proposed changes to the first-year teaching syllabus, led groups of school children on tours of the Department, participated in university open-days and career-days, and mailed teachers around the peninsula advertising a range of services: slide-shows, videos and field-trips. Gradually, however, our aims and interests became more focussed. It was decided to concentrate our work on school students and teachers in the public school system, as a constituency where an archaeological education programme was most needed, and where our strengths - our youth and our energy - would have the most appeal. This saw the establishment at the end of 1992 of our Schools Project, and the focus on educational field excursions.

It was all very well taking archaeology into the classroom in the form of artefact boxes, slide presentations, videos and discussions; but these forms of teaching and learning remained caught up in, and constrained by, the nature of the school as an institution and its particular rules and modes of interaction. In our experience it was very difficult for something new and original to break into the structured environment of the average public school classroom. The real place for archaeology was in the field. Accordingly, beginning in 1993 we developed and ran educational field excursions for school students and trainee-teachers.

The Cape peninsula is fortunate in having a large number of sites from both the pre-colonial and the colonial periods. These range from Early Stone Age artefact scatters, to late-Holocene shell-middens, to the substantial remains of the colonial settlement of Cape Town. Sites were rated for their archaeological interest, for their accessibility, but mainly for the extent to which they provided interesting learning environments. In the end, three sites were chosen: Peers Cave in the Fish Hoek valley, a coastal cave site at Smitswinkelbaai on the False Bay coast, and a group of partially excavated shell-middens on the beach at Kommetjie.

Peers Cave

My source for this description of the site is a lecture given by Janette Deacon to the Simons Town Historical Society in August 1991. She writes:

In a cynical moment one could describe Peers Cave as "The Cave the World Forgot" for it is one of those archaeological sites that was investigated too early to have had the benefit of sophisticated techniques and now that much of the deposit has been removed it is too late to fulfil the promise that it showed. (1)

Almost as interesting as the archaeological deposit is the history of excavation. The site showed extraordinary early promise. With a depth of deposit of over six metres it had the longest sequence of human habitation in a 100 kilometre radius of Cape Town. No fewer than six human burials were excavated from the upper levels. One of the skeletons from a lower level - the so-called Fish Hoek Man - went on to achieve fame and notoriety². Deacon relates that when visiting scientists to the joint meeting of the South African and British Associations for the Advancement of Science in 1929 arrived in Cape Town, they "went direct from the mail steamer to the cave before going anywhere else" (Jager, in Deacon 1991:1)³.

However, a series of disastrous excavations have vandalised the site so that little of archaeological value remains. Deacon reports that the last scientific paper published on the site was a preliminary report in 1948. The collections cannot be re-analysed because the original notes are not detailed enough. Many of the most exciting finds reportedly made in the cave have been mislaid and are no longer in the S. A. Museum collection. Visiting the site is a strange experience.

². This was because the skeleton was thought to come from the Middle Stone Age (Howiesons Poort) levels. At the time there were very few human remains that could be positively associated with the Middle Stone Age. In fact, it now seems likely that the Fish Hoek Man was an intrusive burial from the overlying Later Stone Age levels.

³. In a similar vein, the then Field Marshal Smuts declared of Peers Cave at a meeting of the South African Association for the Advancement of Science in Durban in 1932 that "The exploration of this Cave is not yet complete, but already it promises to be the most remarkable cave site yet found in South Africa" (in Deacon 1991: 1).

Peers Cave is like a photographic negative of an archaeological site. So much has happened there and now the evidence is gone. A line on the wall which now runs well above our heads traces what was once ground level. Despite this - or perhaps because of it - Peers Cave is an extraordinarily evocative site, and is one of my favourite destinations on the field excursion.

Smitswinkelbaai Cave

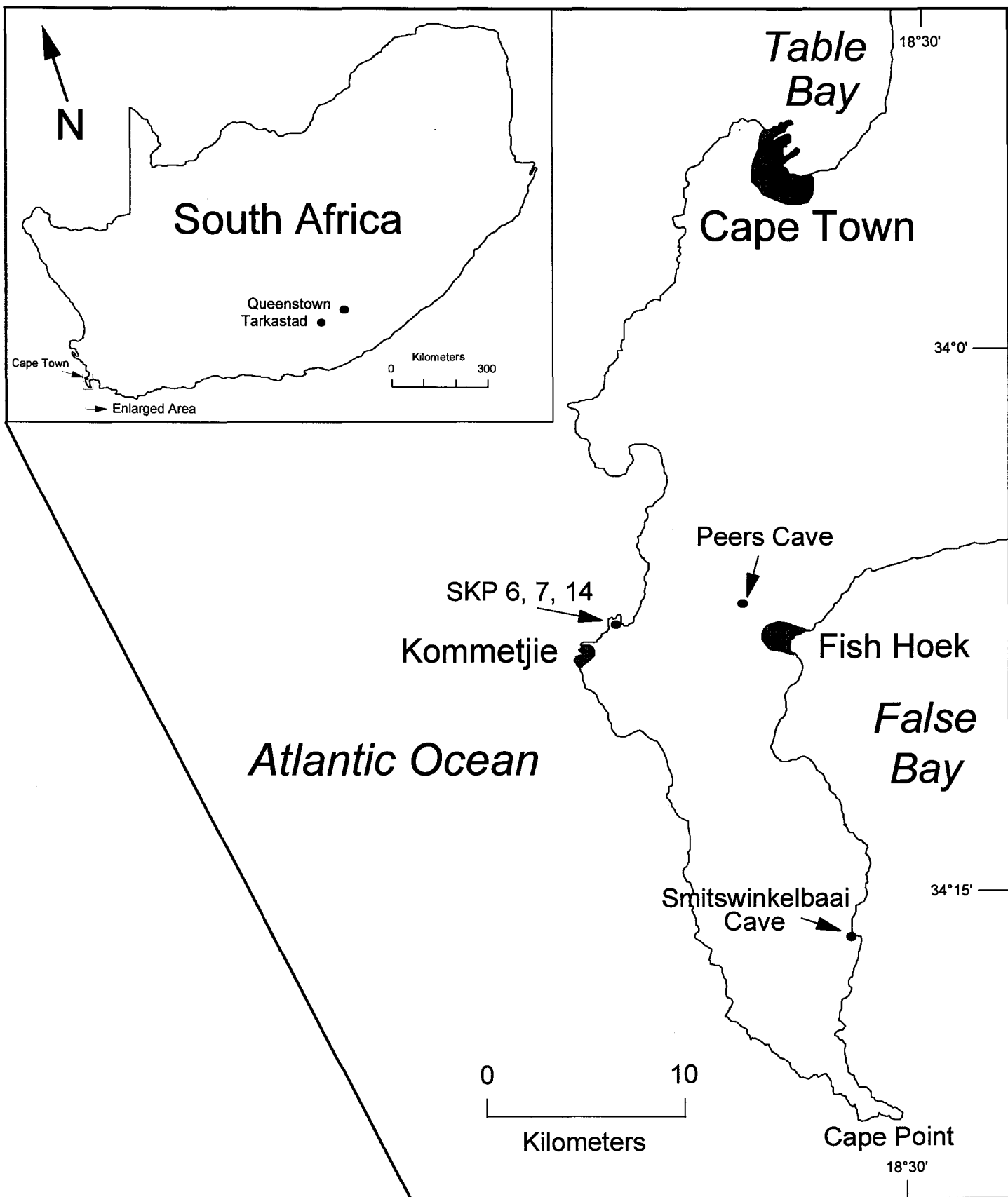
Smitswinkelbaai Cave is a large and impressive cave just above the high-water mark. A series of occupations through the first millenium AD built-up a deposit of over a metre in depth. My source is an excavation report published by Poggenpoel and Robertshaw in the *Archaeological Bulletin* (1981). The process of excavation was itself interesting: the two archaeologists worked with a team of eleven amateur archaeologists who laboured during weekends through much of 1977. This was as a field class for the Department of Extra-Mural Studies at the University of Cape Town. The class also undertook most of the subsequent laboratory work.

The deposit is a stratified shell midden consisting of nine layers. Two radio carbon dates were obtained from charcoal samples from layers four and nine, of 1175 BP and 1420 BP respectively, each with a range of thirty-five years. Pottery was found in all levels. A characteristic of the site is the absence of formal flaked stone tools. This is compensated for by the numerous worked bone and shell artefacts. The faunal collection reflects the surrounding environment and consists of fish, tortoise, marine bird, small mammals and some sheep.

Kommetjie Sites

The Kommetjie visit takes in three excavated sites on the dune cordon on the southern end of Noordhoek Beach, whose official designations are SKP 6, SKP 7, and SKP 14⁴. SKP 6 and SKP 7 are buried shell middens, while SKP 14, the

⁴. My source for this description of the sites is an unpublished excavation report prepared by Jonathan Kaplan for Kommetjie Estates Ltd. Its title is "The



Map of Cape Peninsula showing positions of Peers Cave, Smitswinkelbaai Cave and Kommetjie sites.

most interesting of the sites, is a scatter of shell and cultural remains on an active dune slope. The sites are representative of any number of similar sites along the Cape coast. Besides marine shell and animal bone they contain flaked stone artefacts, pottery, ostrich egg-shell beads, and two grindstones (from SKP 14). What sets them apart is their position on the Cape peninsula and their late dates. With likely calibrated radio-carbon ages of AD 1648 (for SKP 7) and AD 1636 (for SKP 6) they are the most recent known hunter-gatherer settlements on the peninsula, and immediately predate Dutch settlement in 1652⁵.

★

The general form of the field excursions was a round trip beginning at Peers Cave, going on to Smitswinkelbaai Cave where we would break for lunch, and ending at Kommetjie - about six hours in all. We took groups of between twenty and eighty students, from nine years of age upwards. This included a number of adult groups. The majority of the school groups were between standards five and eight (roughly twelve to fifteen years of age). The emphasis was on learning through fun and direct experience. Games, role-playing, staging scenes from the past, group activities, discussions, and experiments with manufacturing implements of wood and stone were all typical activities on the field excursions. The programmes needed to be flexible: with the younger children we might have story-telling and finger-painting; whereas with a group of trainee-teachers we would reverse roles, and get them to develop educational activities and ideas for lessons. A great deal of our own energy went into developing games and activities. To give a sense of how these worked, I have included a sample of three such activities:

Excavation of Three Archaeological Sites at Klein Slangkoppunt, Kommetjie" (1991).

⁵. Three radiocarbon dates were obtained for the sites in all. A charcoal sample from Hearth 2, just below Level 1 in SKP 7 was dated to 300 plus/minus 50 BP (Pta-5609). A second sample from Layer 2 was returned with a date of 440 plus/minus 40 BP (Pta-5607). Charcoal from a hearth in SKP 6 was dated to 340 plus/minus 50 BP.

The Subsistence Game (SWB Cave).

There is something inherently exciting in the idea of being placed somewhere without food and having to make do - particularly if one is twelve years old. The Subsistence Game takes its cue from these desert island fantasies.

The game begins with the facilitator breaking the larger group into small groups of three or four. The groups are given the task of searching the surrounding area, making a list of potential food sources. The SWB site straddles a number of habitats: marine, inter-tidal, fynbos, and even open grassland - a fact which is reflected in the faunal collections excavated from the cave. After half-an-hour the groups are called back to a central point, usually the cave itself, to report-back. This leads to a discussion of subsistence options and strategies, and to the archaeological remains themselves, and the kinds of subsistence strategies exercised by the people who inhabited the site. The game is non-competitive, and the emphasis is on sharing ideas and arriving at common strategies.

The Subsistence Game is useful in introducing a range of concepts and vocabulary: the notion of different plant and animal habitats; the notion of hunted versus gathered foodstuffs (and the social roles which might accompany these activities); archaeological methodological tools such as Minimum Number of Individuals (MNI), and Numbers of Individual Species Present (NISP); some of the detail which has emerged from ethnographies of the Kalahari Bushmen; and more generally, imagining life at the site a thousand years ago.

Finger-painting (Peers Cave).

This is an activity for younger children, and is the best way that we have found of introducing them to some of the ideas around the interpretation of rock art. It requires big sheets of newsprint, poster-paints, and plastic bowls in which to mix the paints. All of this is carried up the hill to Peers Cave, which in addition to being the largest occupation shelter on the Cape peninsula with the longest sequence, is the only one with rock art.

The finger-dots and daubs from the shelter walls are easy to reproduce on paper: we spend some time speculating what they could mean. The children are then encouraged to paint their own pictures, and to tell their own stories in paint. Some begin gleefully spreading paint around the paper. Others experiment, using twigs and leaves as brushes, and adding sand to the paint to change its colour. At the end we have a show-and-tell session. Frequently the topics which come up for discussion are complex and have direct relevance for understanding Bushman rock-art. Although we might use different terms to discuss them, these topics include real versus non-real representation, issues of meaning and interpretation, and the social significance of art.

The Time-line.

Possibly the most difficult concept to convey to children (or adults) is that of deep time - time measured in tens and even hundreds of thousands of years. We have found a time-line the most effective way of concretising a sense of time. A long valley between parallel dunes on the path to Peers Cave provides the ideal venue.

The time-line is drawn with a stick in the sand. One begins by asking the students to name dated events in the past, which one measures off on the line, ten centimetres equals one thousand years. To begin with these events are close to us in time, but they become progressively more distant: When were you born? And your grand-parents? When did the first farming communities establish themselves in southern Africa? What about the earliest evidence for anatomically modern people? And the first stone implements? Soon one needs a volunteer to run with the stick. When did the dinosaurs become extinct? You have to shout to recall your runner - the line would extend into the sea.

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The AW ran field excursions during the summer months from 1993-5. During the course of 1993, our busiest year, we led upwards of 800 children from twelve different schools on field excursions. In all 1500 children and adults have

participated in our field excursion programme, and we have reached a further approximately 2000 through lectures, slide presentations and seminars.

Our annual budget for the years 1993-5 was in the region of R1200 (between 300 and 400 dollars US), in the form of a grant from the Harry Oppenheimer Committee of the Centre for African Studies. This was supplemented by a policy of levying a small charge per student for those schools which could afford it (usually in the order of R3 to R5). This was used to subsidise students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. The grant covered basic administrative costs (postage, telephone), and the cost of producing worksheets and information packs. Schools were expected to arrange and provide their own transport, although on occasion we arranged for companies to donate the use of a bus for the day. The Workshop volunteers initially gave their time without payment, later they were paid a token fee of R30 per full-day excursion.

We used various means to advertise our services. Our initial approach was to pamphlet teachers at each of the approximately 800 schools in the greater Cape Town area. However, once we had built up a network of interested teachers we found it more effective to approach them directly, and work through their contacts. In general, far more approaches were made to the Workshop than we had the volunteers or the resources to handle.

It is difficult to adequately convey the tone of the Archaeology Workshop's activities: the sense of fun and challenge, and at the same time the deeply personal, and often moving, encounter with the archaeological past which they inspired. Looking back through my notes I find that my diary entries from the period capture something of the sense of the moment. Given below are three such entries:

Diary entry no. 1 (July 1993).

[This entry describes one of the classroom presentations that we did as part of our Schools Programme. SACS is a school in the upper-middle class suburb of Newlands, with an historically mainly white student body.]

SACS junior school 'phoned last week wanting us to do something with their standard threes. The weather is too poor for a field excursion so we suggested slides and artefact boxes. Natasha and I agreed to go and do the presentation. We were trying to decide what approach to take - these are young children, about nine years old - and we came up with the idea of storytelling. John Parkington has a set of ethnographic slides of the Tshumkwe San which are very evocative. Using these we built a narrative around a day in the life of a Bushman child, in this case a boy since we had several slides of one boy engaged in different activities.

He had to have a name (//Kabbo), and we could show pictures of his parents. In the morning he goes gathering with his mother, in the afternoon he follows the men on a hunt. That night he dreams about his big day and re-lives its details (rock art slides). It worked well and afterwards there were a barrage of questions: Did he go to school? What were his parent's names? (Nisa and Kwe). Why were some of the men wearing overalls and the women using plastic buckets? I explained that the slides were taken in the 1970s, and we talked about the kinds of pressures acting on the Bushmen, and the changes to so-called traditional life-ways. Natasha led a discussion using the artefact boxes. This works as a kind of show-and-tell. Artefacts are passed around and the students speculate what they might be, and what they were used for.

Afterwards we got the nicest thank-you letters. They had obviously been told to say thank-you for giving up your time, and so on - very formal and correct. One boy wrote thank-you "for wasting your time".

Diary entry no. 2 (August 1993).

Field excursion today with a small group of standard eights from Christian Brothers College in town, only twelve students and their teacher. They turned out to be a lot of fun. At Kommetjie we decided to put on plays on the beach. The students split into two groups, and each group went some way off to rehearse their scene. Both groups decided to re-enact the moment of historical encounter between Dutch settlers led by Van Riebeeck and Khoisan pastoralists at the

Cape, which they imagined to have happened on a beach like ours (I had mentioned the late dates on the shell-middens).

At one point a strange occurrence set us all giggling nervously: the first group was acting out their sketch. Cattle happened to be a prominent part of the action, as the chattel of the Khoisan, and as the object of Dutch commercial intentions. There was some confusion as to how to represent them. Eventually one of the boys in the group got reluctantly onto all-fours, mooing and bellowing. At that exact moment a small herd of cattle - the real thing this time - came trotting over the nearest dune, pursued by a small boy. There was a moment's shocked silence. Where was history, and where life?

Later I learnt that the cattle came from the shack settlement on the road to Kommetjie. The people who live there often have direct ties to the countryside. They have been precipitated into the city in search of work, and some of them have managed to bring their stock. I think of the ingenuity that must go into running cattle in these urban spaces, particularly when one's claim to the land is so precarious - the wooden shacks alongside the million-rand real estate of Kommetjie.

One more thing: The students were unanimous in wanting to identify with the Khoisan against the settlers. Most of them were Coloured, and they spoke about "our" people and "our" history. I thought about Smith's article, and about the changes in South Africa in the intervening ten years.

Diary entry no. 3 (November 1995).

[This is an entry describing the last field excursion that I led]

Excursion today with a group of thirty trainee-teachers from the Cape Town Teachers Training College. All of them are African, mainly Xhosa-speaking. Many of the students are older, having returned to college in later-life. Some were in detention in the mid-eighties. Two men and a woman are returned ANC cadres. There is a tremendous sense of resolve about the group, a kind of moral seriousness. They are putting themselves through college - one student says as

a way of giving something back to the country, by developing the youth. Their lecturer, June Bam, is wonderful, an activist who has carried the struggle through to the field of education. June has organized three mini-buses from a sports development programme based at Newlands cricket ground. They were donated to the programme by Queen Elizabeth of Great Britain, part of whose entourage they transported during her state visit earlier in the year. Each bus has the Queen's crest on the doors. I am wondering what ploy June used to get her hands on them.

We are lucky with the weather, a mild summer day. We try a new path to Peers Cave, along the ridge rather than up the Dune. Wendy and I are surprised by the students' level of knowledge and interest. They ask detailed questions, and want to know why none of this is in the history textbooks. I turn the table on them and ask them to work in their groups on developing approaches to teaching archaeology in the classroom. The discussion becomes very animated. There is a lot of debate on questions of social value: whether we need archaeology in this country; what apartheid did to our consciousness of the past; what their role as teachers might be. This discussion runs all the way back to the busses. A group at the back sings freedom songs. We shoulder our way through the Port Jackson scrub, quoting Fanon and Biko above the sound of the singing.

June has organized a braai at Smitswinkel Bay. The visit to Kommetjie is forgotten as we eat, talk and drowse in the sun.

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II. The Teachers' Workshop.

By mid-1995 I was faced with the problem of a declining number of volunteers. Natasha Erlank had left for Cambridge, and Janette Smith was spending increasing periods of time in Johannesburg where she was working on some exciting public education projects. At the same time conditions more generally had changed as the debate around history and education had moved on: at the time it seemed that it was no longer so much a case of advocating for the inclusion of archaeological pasts in school syllabi, as providing skills and

resources for teachers to get on with the job. A third factor was that for the first time we had real money. An application to the Extension Services Committee of the University of Cape Town based on our existing programmes had been successful and we had been awarded an amount of R8400. This was a substantial award in terms of the Extension Services Committee's budget, and far more money than we had previously had at our disposal.

I decided to go ahead with a project which I had had in mind for some time. This was to run a two-day workshop on archaeology for in-service and training school history teachers with the aim of upgrading their skills in this subject. The workshop was intended to be a model for future workshops, and it was hoped that the teachers would become the core group of an expanding body of history teachers with access to archaeological skills. The workshop would use the kind of practical, hands-on methodology which had become a standard part of our programmes. As I saw it, the workshop would have two major advantages over the field excursions. In the first place it would be a more effective use of resources: by directly empowering teachers the effects of our work would be multiplied as they in turn passed-on skills and knowledge to generations of students in the classroom. In the second place it would avoid the major disadvantage of the field excursions, which was their lack of structured follow-up. The field excursions could be wonderful fun for a day - but their usefulness was limited if that was all they were.

My first move was to employ a part-time organiser to do the administrative work involved in a project of this nature. I felt justified in doing so since I was working on my PhD as well as lecturing full-time, and also in view of our increased revenue. In fact, this turned out to be a crucial decision in the ultimate success of the teachers' workshop. I had worked with Cheryl Minkley in the Centre for African Studies. She had majored in archaeology and had been a primary school teacher. More importantly, she is a skilled organiser and is expert in the kind of democratic, inclusive way of operating which had come from her involvement with left cultural and political organisations. Cheryl and I shared an ethos and a set of values, and this was to help us as we pulled together the disparate parts of the project.

My second move was to contact June Bam who had been seconded for the year to the Faculty of Education at the University of Cape Town. I convened the first meeting of what was to become a working group to organise the workshop, and invited Professor Andrew Smith to chair the group along with myself. His involvement in the project was to prove valuable, as was that of another of our colleagues, Dr. Julie Lee-Thorpe. Julie had become interested in issues of archaeology and school education through her involvement with an organisation called WISE (Women In Science Education). The other members of the group were Bellinda Mutti, a graduate student, and Harriet Cliff who worked as the education officer in Martin Hall's research unit, RESUNACT.

The Planning Process.

There are a larger than usual number of issues to be worked through in organising a programme of this nature in South Africa, because of the legacy of apartheid and the historically divided nature of South African cities and education departments. For example, our aim was specifically to attract black and Coloured in-service teachers, so the issue of a venue for the workshop became crucial, both because of the historical connotations of particular parts of the city and because the public transport networks are so unevenly distributed. Similarly, the timing of the workshop and its placement in the school year were important if teachers, who are notoriously over-worked, were to attend. Cheryl's approach was to work closely with a group of teachers identified by June Bam as likely candidates for the workshop, and to consult them at each stage of the process. Interestingly, a venue at the University of Cape Town was chosen above a township venue. The idea of hiring a mini-bus to transport teachers was mooted, but was thought by the teachers themselves to be unnecessary. It was decided to hold the workshop over two Saturday mornings, and the last Saturday of August and the first Saturday of September were chosen. These fall in the third quarter of the South African teaching year, usually a slightly slower time for teachers.

There was a great deal of discussion about the content of the workshops. The teachers were consulted, but preferred to leave decisions on the question of a workshop syllabus to the working group. In the end we tried to do two things: we

introduced teachers to the idea of archaeology and to some basic concepts in archaeological theory and method; and we visited some key moments and topics in the archaeological history of South Africa. To make this as useful as possible we keyed topics into the existing interim history syllabus. It was also assumed that the teachers would know little or nothing about archaeology, as proved to be the case. Members of the working group would teach and facilitate the various sessions. In addition I approached Professors John Parkington and Martin Hall to teach one session each on their own areas of expertise. Mandy Esterhuizen, an archaeologist from Gauteng intensively involved in the field of archaeology and education agreed to lead the final session along with Julie Lee-Thorpe.

An important decision made early on was that the workshop should be officially accredited so that the teachers could make the most of it for CV purposes. This was done through the university's provision for the accrediting of short courses. At the end of the workshop each of the teachers received a certificate of attendance, and the workshop itself was run as an official university programme.

The planning process took place over a six week period during which the planning group met weekly. Suggestions and ideas were sent to Cheryl between meetings, and she brought them to the meetings as proposals or points for discussion. As a structure this worked well and we succeeded in keeping the time spent in meetings to a minimum. Close contact was maintained with the teachers during this process. They were phoned regularly and sent written information and details about the course by post or fax.

Running the Workshops.

During the planning stages of the workshop we had worked with a figure of ten to fifteen teachers attending. In the end eighteen teachers and trainee teachers attended the first Saturday workshop, and all eighteen returned for the second, a fact which will speak volumes to anyone who has been involved in organising programmes of this nature. They came from the following schools and institutions: St Mary's Primary School (Retreat); Stephen Road Primary School (Lotus River); Luleka Primary School (Khayelitsha); Buck Road Primary School (Grassy Park); and the Cape Town College of Education in Mowbray. A South

African eye would recognise these as former DEC and DET schools. A number of the trainee teachers from Cape Town College of Education were students who had been with me on the field excursion the previous October.

The first Saturday programme focussed on archaeological content. I began by introducing the idea of archaeology and talked about the long history of human development in Africa. John Parkington followed with a site study looking at the archaeology of hunter-gatherers on the Cape West Coast. Teachers were given "homework" for the following session, and the first day's programme ended punctually. The second Saturday began with a session on Historical Archaeology led by Martin Hall. This was followed by a practical session on archaeology and cross-curricula teaching. Mandy Esterhuizen spoke about the current status of the process of history curriculum revision. These sessions were interspersed with activities and discussions during which the class was broken down into smaller groups. For example, on the first day one of the discussions dealt with ways of explaining the concept of archaeological time to pupils. Discussions were extremely animated, and we repeatedly found ourselves having to cut an interesting discussion so that we could get on with the programme.

Part of Cheryl Minkley's brief was to write a full report on the workshop. This was intended as a form of assessment, but also as a manual for future workshops since it contains details of each step in the planning process. Cheryl manages to capture something of the tone of the workshop sessions. Of the first session she writes:

The first day of the workshop dealt largely with content. The first session introduced archaeology to the teachers by means of the story of its long history. Teachers were incredibly motivated and had many questions. It was difficult to address all the issues raised in the limited time we had. The session was extended to enable the long history to be completed, albeit in an abbreviated form. (3)

This is her account of the close of the second session:

Teachers filled in evaluation forms and the workshop ended on time. Teachers were clearly reluctant to leave, and discussion continued casually for some time after the close. A number of teachers expressed their interest in going on field trips to archaeological digs. Many of them

requested further workshops and were very keen to have continued contact with the Archaeology Department. (5)

Education Resources.

At the start of the first day's session each teacher was given a resource pack containing reprints of articles which would reinforce the day's content, a reading list for future reference, a pen, a pad of A4 paper, and a programme for the day. One of the problems identified by teachers was their being hampered by having to use outdated history textbooks in the classroom. Heinemann, Maskew Miller Longman and Oxford University Press, all of them publishers of school textbooks, were approached and told about the workshop. They were each asked to donate five textbooks which could be distributed among the teachers. Maskew Miller Longman and Oxford University Press donated five of their primary school history series, both of them up-to-date textbooks which offer useful new content. At the end of the workshop each institution was able to take away a full set of textbooks.

Almost as important as the content of the sessions was the process whereby they were captured and recorded. The university's television unit was contracted to make a video recording of each session. Each of the small group discussions was captured on audio tape. The tapes from the first session were reviewed in planning the second session. All of these video and audio tapes, along with Cheryl Minkley's report and a copy of the resource material, have been housed in the Education Library of the University of Cape Town and are available for loan by teachers.

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Discussion and Comments.

I. A People's Archaeology.

In developing my approach to archaeology and education in the Archaeology Workshop I drew inspiration from two sources. The first was an existing literature on archaeology and education⁶. Of particular relevance was the work of a group of local post-graduates who had gone the route of doing their masters degrees through a unit called the Community Education Resources Project, attached to the Centre for African Studies at the University of Cape Town. Gaby Ritchie's masters dissertation (*Dig the Herders/Display the Hottentots; the production and presentation of knowledge about the past*, 1990) is a study of the processes by which academic knowledge is produced and presented. It turns into a double-handed study: on the one hand an analysis of the representation of Khoikhoi herders in museum displays; on the other hand a critique of existing power/knowledge relations in the discipline. Taking her cue from debates in the 1980s concerning a so-called People's Education and a People's History, she puts forward the notion of a People's Archaeology - that is, "an archaeology dependent on community participation in research, interpretation and presentation" (ii).

Ritchie makes a useful distinction between popularising knowledge and democratising knowledge. While many academics from both the left and the right have been involved in popularising knowledge, democratising knowledge implies community participation in the generation and accreditation of knowledge. Ritchie writes that a People's Archaeology "could theoretically be defined as having the same aims and embodying the same principles as People's History" (6). Of People's History she writes that it "is defined by the different processes through which knowledge about the past is produced. People's History does not only mean history *about* the people - it also means history *by* the people and history *for* the people" (32). Like People's History, the principle behind People's Archaeology

⁶. For example, see Stone and MacKenzie's useful volume in the *One World Archaeology* series, called *The Excluded Past; Archaeology in Education* (1990). This contains essays on archaeology and education in Nigeria, Kenya, Namibia, Mozambique and South Africa. During the period of its operation the Archaeological Resource Centre published a journal called *Archaeology and Education*. The second issue (1990) was a special issue on archaeology and education in the Third World, timed to coincide with the second World Archaeological Congress.

...is an empowering of communities so that they develop the ability to produce knowledge and establish for themselves a popular memory... The aim is for communities to develop further the capacity to locate themselves historically in society, and locate their societies historically. (32)

Ritchie's critique of traditional archaeological practice was timely, and had the effect of connecting archaeology with broader debates in the social sciences - always valuable in a discipline given to theoretical isolationism. More importantly, it acted as a point of focus for a number of subsequent studies. Rushdi Nackerdien's masters dissertation (*Archaeology and Education in South Africa: Towards a People's Archaeology*, 1994) is the most extensive study on the topic of archaeology and education in South Africa to emerge to date. He takes up Ritchie's notion of a People's Archaeology and applies it to his own examples. The first of these is a short excavation at a site on the grounds of the University of Cape Town involving students from a local tertiary institution called Khanya College⁷. The second was the production of a popular resource in the form of a booklet for children called *Faizel's Journey*. This introduces junior school children to a range of archaeological concepts and vocabulary via a narrative describing the adventures of a young boy. It cleverly makes use of dreaming as a plot device to take Faizel back to an imagined past.

In many ways Nackerdien's project is a natural predecessor to my own work. He describes growing up "on the wrong side of the river" in Paarl (the Berg River serves as a boundary between the town's black and white residents). A useful chapter titled "A Historiography of early Southern African Archaeology" describes the contributions of Jan Smuts and Cecil Rhodes to the establishment and institutionalization of archaeology in Southern Africa⁸. He reaches the same conclusion that I do when he writes that in South Africa "mainstream archaeology does not form part of the vernacular vocabulary of the past" (12). A

⁷. The site is an historical site called Velgelegen. Khanya College assists students from former DEC and DET institutions to make the transition to university education.

⁸. Rhodes played a significant role in the establishment of Iron Age archaeology in Southern Africa - albeit a largely negative one - through his involvement with the site of Great Zimbabwe.

perceptive concluding chapter ("Conclusion: the implications of People's Archaeology for a changing South African society") correctly identifies identity politics and issues around land reform as two of the areas in which archaeology has increasingly been drawn into contention in a post-apartheid South Africa⁹.

Nackerdien draws on two examples which I, in turn, have found instructive. The first is a project called the Archaeological Resource Centre in Toronto, which I have reasons of my own for taking an interest in, and which I describe in the following section. The second is the excavation of a site called Manyikeni in Mozambique as a collaborative venture involving local residents and archaeologists. The project is described in Paul Sinclair's paper, "The earth is our history book: archaeology in Mozambique (in *The Excluded Past*, 1990). He writes of the neglect of pre-colonial history as part of a more general crisis in education in Mozambique. At the time of independence fewer than 60 resident Mozambiquans out of a population of twelve million had university degrees. What schooling there was "had been almost entirely related to the Portuguese metropolitan frame of reference" (152).

Sinclair writes that: "Since independence there has been a concerted effort to increase public awareness of the cultural value of the archaeological heritage" (153). He notes that:

Public involvement has been an integral part of [the new research process]... and students from primary and secondary schools, and people living in the rural areas have contributed fundamentally to the success of the research efforts. (153)

What makes the project at Manyikeni so impressive was the extent of public participation, and the fact that much of the work was undertaken in wartime conditions¹⁰. The residents of the Manyikeni locality contributed two seasons of

⁹. Where Nackerdien disappoints is in his largely inaccurate account of the Archaeology Workshop. His remarks are unreferenced and appear to have been made without consulting either our records, or any of the people involved.

¹⁰. At the time the government and citizens of Mozambique were under attack by the bandit organization, the Mozambiquan National Resistance (RENAMO), which was supplied by South African Military Intelligence.

unpaid work on the site, and later participated in the construction and running of a site museum and cultural centre. Sinclair writes:

Work at Manyikeni provided a unique opportunity to balance the research and museological aspects of archaeology, while addressing at the same time the need of the local residents and the broader issues that should be faced in a postcolonial context. (155)

The final work in this genre to which I want to refer is a dissertation by Juanita Pastor called *Archaeology, Museology and Education: a case-study at Vergelegen* (1993). Pastor combines the notion of a People's Archaeology with a methodology drawn from Freirean pedagogics, which she applies in a case-study involving a farmworker community on the wine-producing estate of Vergelegen in the South-western Cape. Here public attention was focussed on the discovery of a human skeleton in the course of excavation, and its eventual reburial. Pastor's interest is in the relationship between archaeology, museology and the "broader community". In this connection she writes of the "gap between academic and community perceptions of the role of archaeology and museums" (abstract). Of particular value is her more specific notion of community. In a section called "Perceptions of Archaeology" (Chapter 5) she makes use of interview material from her farmworker informants to canvas popular perceptions of archaeology.

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Critique: A Post-Colonial Archaeology is not a People's Archaeology.

All three authors note that the idea of a People's Archaeology developed out of a specific historical context - as Nackerdien puts it, the "concept developed out of the cauldron of the mid-1980s mass resistance movements" (9); and in many ways it remains tied to this political and intellectual milieu. This is a source of its strength: the energetic phrasing of its critique, and the uncompromising nature of its populism. But it is also a source of its weakness, in that there are certain constructions and concepts which seemed justified and even necessary in that period, which sit uncomfortably in the fundamentally transformed political landscape of post-apartheid South Africa. The first of these is the notion of "the

People" itself, written in the singular with the characteristic capitalization. Implicit in this phrase is the idea of an oppressed people, or a people united against apartheid - ideas of solidarity and resistance. In the era of mass-based politics demands were made on behalf of the People, and it was the People who mobilized on the streets and in their organizations. What this construction misses, of course, are the significant divisions and differences within the oppressed group itself - the multiplicity of "peoples" contained within "the People". In an era of popular democracy it is these divisions which have increasingly come to define the face of politics, just as they have come to define people's claim to the past. Where is the "People" in a People's Archaeology? More particularly, on whose behalf will a People's Archaeology write, when contest has become the very essence of most contemporary claims to the past?

One of the tensions in Nackerdien's text is that he is too perceptive a commentator not to be aware of this difficulty. In his introduction he writes: "The major criticism of the "People's-rhetoric" is the fact that it homogenises groups. It attempts to gloss over class and other differences in order to demonstrate the bond between different groups in resistance to the state" (15). Further on he writes that "the... "People" does and does not exist. It exists as a group sometimes only in an overtly political form, as a doctrine promoted by a political party or player... The "people"-category is a very "soft" and malleable entity, and not something "hard" that can be caught and held" (17). Given this indeterminacy, his reasons for retaining the concept appear less than convincing. Immediately after the passage quoted above, he continues somewhat mysteriously: "To talk about a People's Archaeology is therefore to talk about the ideas and aims of the concept, but not about a "People" themselves" (17).

My second point concerns the gap between rhetoric and practice. While a People's Archaeology has shown itself to be strong on the former, it has been weak on the latter. What exactly does it mean to write of an archaeology "by the people, for the people", and how does this translate into terms of everyday practice? Of the three writers it is Nackerdien who, via his examples, comes closest to exemplifying the practice of a People's Archaeology, and yet his excavation at Vergelegen looks remarkably like traditional archaeology, however he might protest its difference.

However, my most serious criticism of the notion of a People's Archaeology concerns the nature of its frame of reference, and the terms in which it sets itself up as an oppositional practice. Ritchie defines a People's Archaeology as a local phenomenon in terms of its opposition to dominant or "State History" (meaning apartheid history). She writes:

State History is that history presented and controlled by the state. While the content and interpretations will differ from state to state, South African State History validates the position of the dominant class. (31)

In South Africa "the practise of People's History would be towards the liberation of the oppressed in order that they may develop their own insights into past processes, unbounded by dominant interpretations" (32). What is missing from this conception is a sense of the relation between local archaeology and a global disciplinary structure. In this connection I would make the following points: first, that South African archaeology is not so very different from other colonial archaeologies. Second, that the processes affecting its development have always been global rather than simply local processes. And third, that in an era when the opposition between official and alternative forms of culture, education and history are being broken down, the challenges facing archaeology in South Africa remain, or have grown more acute. It is primarily from a sense of its relation to the more global processes which have shaped the development of the discipline - nationalism, colonialism and imperialism - that I write of the notion of a post-colonial archaeology. As I read it, the challenge for the future will not be about substituting a People's interpretation for a State interpretation, so much as it will be about negotiating our place within a more global set of forces and relations affecting the discipline.

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II. The Archaeological Resource Centre.

The second important source of ideas for the Archaeology Workshop was a schools-based public archaeology project in Toronto, Canada, called the Archaeological Resource Centre (ARC). At the time of its founding the

Archaeological Resource Centre, which was attached to the Board of Education of the city of Toronto, was the first archaeological education facility within a North American public school system. Directly funded by the Ontario Ministry of Culture and Communications, the ARC had a start-up budget of nearly a quarter of a million dollars. By 1990 it employed seven full-time archaeologists as educators and researchers, and 12 000 students and adults passed through its programmes each year. The advantages of being attached to a board of education are considerable. The Toronto Board of Education (TBE) has more than 100 000 students in regular day-school, and serves the needs of another 200 000 people, many of them immigrant adults, through its Continuing Education programmes - all of whom were, potentially at least, placed within reach of the Centre¹¹.

I had heard reports of the Archaeological Resource Centre, and the exciting work being done there. By the time we started our own schools programme, I determined to pay them a visit. I was able to do so in November 1992 as a result of a travel award from the Students Representative Council of the University of Cape Town, made on condition that whatever activities I undertook held potential benefits for the student-body as a whole. It was an interesting time to be visiting North America with a heritage-related agenda. The 500th anniversary of the landing of Columbus had occasioned an outpouring of events and emotions, both celebratory and critical. It was a time of ceremonies and seminars, debates and demonstrations. Strongly present was an awareness of the ambiguous nature of the legacy of Columbus, of its disastrous consequences for native people. I remember jumping off the bus to photograph a panel of anti-Colombus graffiti at the University of British Columbia. As an historical moment it served to raise in intense form questions about the meaning and nature of the past in our lives, about the legacy of colonial conquest, and the notion of national heritage. The combination of this historical anger, and the time spent at ARC reviewing their original and exciting programmes proved to be remarkably clarifying from a personal point of view. It helped to develop my own thinking about the social roles and potential futures of archaeology.

¹¹. The Archaeological Resource Centre has since had its funding withdrawn and has been forced to close, a victim of local politics. I was fortunate in visiting the Centre during the high period of its operation, at a time when it served as a unique example of the potential of archaeology in the field of education.

I have drawn additional information about the programmes of the ARC from a series of papers by the Centre's director, Karolyn Smardz. The Archaeological Resource Centre runs a year round educational programme divided according to the season. The centre-piece of each year's activities is a major research and teaching excavation, conducted from spring through to autumn. The research programme of the Centre is focussed on the excavation and analysis of sites relating to Toronto's nineteenth-century heritage. It is specifically interested in researching domestic, commercial and light industrial sites occupied by immigrants in the nineteenth-century city. Prior to the founding of the Centre, the brief archaeological history of Toronto had included the excavation of upper-income domestic sites, public institutions and military establishments (Fort Rouille, 1751; and Fort York, 1790s). Sites are chosen for their archaeological value in terms of this research programme, and for their potential suitability for the operation of archaeological education programmes. The first site excavated by the ARC was the home and business of an escaped slave couple from Kentucky, who had begun upper Canada's first taxi business - the so-called Thornton Blackburn House. Since then several excavations have been in school yards themselves, many of which overlie domestic, commercial and small industrial sites. This particular focus on Historical Archaeology has the practical advantage of concentrating sites in Toronto's inner-city core, along major public transport routes and within easy reach of TBE schools. It also means that for many of the students, who are themselves inner-city residents and the descendants of immigrant Canadians, there is a direct historical connection to the archaeology being researched.

During the spring and autumn months the Centre runs half-day on-site programmes for students from Grade 4 (age nine or so) upwards¹². The programme begins with an audiovisually-aided presentation focussing on the goals and methods of archaeology in an urban site situation. The presentation emphasizes the fact that the students are "really being archaeologists" for the day, and that they need to be very careful, since "a site is destroyed in the

¹². Smardz reports finding that students below the age of 9 generally have insufficient comprehension of the chronological passage of time to understand stratigraphy. Neither do small children possess the stamina or eye-hand coordination necessary for archaeological excavation in a site context.

process of digging it up": if they make a mistake, the archaeologists in charge "can't fix it" (Smardz 1990: 301). The students are then divided into groups of six under the supervision of an ARC staff member¹³. Equipment is distributed, and each student is assigned an excavation unit. Students are instructed in excavation techniques, in artefact retrieval methods, in the proper screening of all soil removed from each unit, and in mapping techniques using a specially designed set of colour-coded forms. All artefacts are mapped in situ, a practice which helps ensure the proper recovery of data, as well as reinforcing the need for slow and careful excavation. Throughout the active part of the programme instructors discuss the significance of interesting objects recovered by the students.

At the end of the excavation session students and supervisors clean up their units, and gather around display cases containing previously excavated artefacts. They discuss ways in which archaeologists identify artefacts, and how recovered materials can aid in dating and interpreting the site. Students are thanked for their participation, and given a site-button as a souvenir of their day. In the event of poor weather a rainy-day programme is put into operation - usually cleaning and cataloguing artefacts in the site laboratory.

During the summer months the Archaeological Resource Centre offers archaeological field school courses for Grade 11 and 12 students. These are credit bearing courses in TBE administered schools, and are taken as part of a student's normal school programme. Field school students are divided into groups of no more than four to each ARC staff member. Each student is assigned an excavation unit for the entire season, and is responsible for its excavation and recording. Specific archaeological skills are taught - first in the classroom, then in the field. At least one day a week is spent in the laboratory, processing artefacts recovered in each unit. Field school students are assessed on the basis of a written examination and the submission of a "mini-site report". This last includes archival research about the site, a description of the

¹³. In the state of Ontario a 1:6 ratio of supervisors to students is the maximum ratio permitted for a public archaeology project. Smardz recommends a 1:4 ratio for field schools, "at least when dealing with teenagers" (1990: 302).

stratigraphy complete with plan views and profiles, an analysis of artefacts found in each layer and feature, and a basic interpretation of finds in each unit.

Half-day programmes are run in the Centre's classroom facilities during the winter months. These introduce students to a range of topics covered by archaeology and related disciplines. Programmes are participatory, and the emphasis is on hands-on activities. Some of the programmes taught in the past include: "Ontario rock art" ("where students learn about the role art plays in a non-technological society, and produce their own versions on pieces of old roofing slate" 1990: 304); "Native foodways" (the class makes and eats a native Iroquoian dish called "sagamite"); and "The archaeology of early Toronto", where artefacts excavated from around the city are used to illustrate its economic, social and technological development. These programmes need to be flexible, both with respect to curriculum-relevance, and the age of the participating students. A course on "Science and archaeology" designed for 10 to 12 year olds, for example, is also modified and upgraded as "Scientific dating methods" for 16 to 18 year olds.

Over the winter months the staff of the Centre undertake the analysis and interpretation of the preceding season's excavation with a view to the production of a final site report¹⁴. They also work with educational consultants and teachers to design new curriculum packages relevant to Ministry of Education guide-lines. This includes the development of instructional media ranging from videos to crossword puzzles for use by the classroom teacher as introductory or follow-up materials relating to a class field excursion to the Resource Centre. One of the most beguiling aspects of the work done at ARC is the manner in which archaeological research, in many cases carried out by school students themselves, is fed back into the formal school curriculum. The happy cycle emerges whereby students participate - however fleetingly - in the production of those same materials which they encounter in the classroom.

¹⁴. The projects undertaken by the Archaeological Resource Centre include the so-called Blackburn House site ("Bringing Freedom to Light"); the Trinity Bellwoods public archaeology project at Gore Vale, and the excavation of the O'Sullivan Inn site ("A Window on the Past").

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Archaeology as Active Learning.

Clearly the importance of the work done at the Archaeological Resource Centre lies in several directions. One might note its importance from a purely research point of view; or from a teaching point of view, and the development of classroom resources; or from a conservation point of view, and the creation of an archaeologically sensitive class of people. However, in terms of my own interests in this study, there are three ideas that I want to develop in more detail. The first is the notion that the programmes of the Archaeological Resource Centre (and archaeology more generally) hold out the intriguing possibility of offering a unique route to the past, a new way of entering and understanding history. This is not history as text or as linear narrative, but history as experience, as discovery, as something which is grasped through the surfaces of the body as much as through an action of the intellect.

The primary site of this interaction is the act of excavation itself, in which the various elements of this process cohere: the sense of personal agency, the excitement of discovery, and the materiality of the archaeological past. However, excavation is not the only path to this experience. There is an activity that I do with every group that I take to Peers Cave. I gather the group at the mouth of the cave, from where one has a tremendous view across the Fish Hoek valley. Then I ask them to close their eyes, and to be very quiet and simply to listen: to the water dripping from the cave roof, to the stillness of the valley, to the sound of the wind. I tell them that this place has been a home to people for a very long time - tens, even hundreds of thousands of years. Typically a stillness settles on the group, a kind of profound awareness of the continuity of human experience. This lasts for thirty seconds, one minute, and it is with reluctance that I recall the group to the present. When it works - and it often does - there is something ineffable about such an experience, which to my mind is the chief value of the field excursions¹⁵.

¹⁵. The echoes with the kind of contexts described by Eagleton in *The Ideology of the Aesthetic* are obvious. What we have here is an encounter with the territory of the emotions and the affect, which he describes as that "dense, swarming territory beyond... [Western philosophy's] own mental enclave" (1990: 13). I like

The second idea that I want to develop - one which grows out of this potential of archaeology to allow us to "know" or to "experience" the past in ways other than through the cold rationality of the printed page - concerns the value of archaeology as a teaching resource. Smardz, in fact, makes this notion of the pedagogical value of archaeology the central theme in her own discussions of the work of the Centre. In a 1989 paper ("Educational Archaeology: Toronto Students Dig Into Their Past") she writes:

Archaeological artefacts, from the tiniest bead or chert flake to entire domestic or industrial buildings, have a great advantage for educational purposes in that they are tangible. Students can actually reach out and put their "hands on the past". (155)

Or again, in a paper called "Teaching people to touch the past: archaeology in the Toronto school system" (1991):

With archaeology, educators have a unique opportunity to involve ordinary people and even school children in the actual processes of scientific and cultural research. Students can not only see the various methods of discovery in operation, but they can reach out and touch artifacts, hearths, layers, and postmolds. Participants can experience their texture, their scent, color, and weight for themselves. They can be the first humans to handle an object since it was left behind in the earth a hundred or a thousand years ago. They can actually touch the past. (135)¹⁶

this example because it takes us back to the kind of encounter with the past described by Michael Shanks in *Experiencing the Past*, but this time put to work in a post-colonial context as a force for social change.

¹⁶. Also see Tilley (1989) "Excavation as theatre". He writes: "Everyone who has dug up anything knows the excitement of bringing an ancient object to its first light for centuries. Everyone who has directed an archaeological excavation knows the excitement of finding sense in the pattern of many ancient objects revealed" (275). Tilley's emphasis on the theatrical and performative aspects of excavation makes a similar point about archaeology providing a potentially unique route to the past: "Excavation has a unique role to play as a theatre where people may be able to produce their own pasts, pasts which are meaningful to them... excavation provides, much more readily than museum displays or books, possibilities for enthusing an interest in and awareness of the past among non-archaeologists" (278).

The Centre's own approach to teaching with archaeology is based on the notion of "active learning" which is articulated in terms of the so-called Cognitive-Skills-Development Model in use in Ontario Ministry of Education schools. This is an eight-stage model of learning acquisition - the stages are: focus, organise, locate, record, evaluate, synthesize, apply and communicate - which Smardz notes closely parallel the stages of a typical archaeological research programme. She writes: "Archaeology provides the teacher with a pursuit tailor-made to the needs of the modern educator, because of its uniquely multidisciplinary character, its suitability for active learning programming, and the potential of the study for meeting the requirements of the Cognitive-Skills-Development Model" (1990: 295).

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Nationhood and Identity in Toronto.

The third idea which I want briefly to develop concerns the work of the Archaeological Resource Centre in relation to notions of nationhood and identity. Toronto has a substantial immigrant population, most of which is concentrated in economically-depressed inner-city neighbourhoods; that is, those neighbourhoods in which the ARC is situated, and in which it does the majority of its work. As a schools based project the Archaeological Resource Centre finds itself drawn beyond the classroom context, to the home and social contexts which lie at the back of it. In a paper called "The past through tomorrow: interpreting Toronto's heritage to a multicultural public"¹⁷ Smardz notes that:

The average school system, at least in urban areas, is doing a great deal more than teaching reading, writing and arithmetic these days. Boards and departments of education are confronted with an ever-changing

¹⁷. Karolyn Smardz passed this paper on to me in the form of an unpublished report submitted to the Southeast Region Interagency Archaeological Services Division of the (Canadian) National Parks Service. The version that I have is undated, but was written in 1992. I have quoted from this paper extensively in the section that follows because it contains some of Smardz's most perceptive comments on the role of ARC with respect to issues of identity and social integration.

kaleidoscope of problems owing to their position on the front lines of social and economic change. Immigration, poverty, child abuse and neglect all impact directly on the kind of students who are going to be sitting in front of a teacher in the classroom. (5-6)

The response of the Centre has been a conscious attempt to incorporate local communities in archaeological projects in their neighbourhood, through working with social service agencies, local history groups and community organizations. Smardz tells of a formal excavation opening of a site in a largely Portuguese area of the city timed to coincide with the annual Portugal Day festival: "the announcement (in English, Italian and Portuguese) that everyone was invited to come and participate in the dig was made right after the parade arrived for the Portugal Day Festival. There were 150 000 people in the park at the time" (10). Smardz's own description of the social value of this work is specifically phrased in terms of the assumption of new forms of identity:

Since Toronto is both historically and currently a city of immigrants, a considerable number of our students do not have English as their mother tongue. Yet these people are now Torontonians. The heritage resources we are digging up are relics of their new country. One of our major objectives as a public archaeology institution is to give even the most recent arrivals to the city a sense of ownership in Toronto's wealth of heritage resources. (15-16)

In this example the archaeological past mediates in the process of identity-creation, offering immigrant Canadians a bridge into Canadian society and culture, by buying into the historicism which underwrites Canadian national life. This needs to be numbered among the abilities of archaeology in a social and educational setting: its ability to connect people to a sense of the past, even where they have no direct relation to the particular histories being unearthed. In a final paragraph in which she attempts to account for the successes of Archaeological Resource Centre in this field, Smardz writes: "The key is finding mechanisms for giving ordinary people a sense of ownership in the past. We archaeologists can do that by offering up archaeology to all members of the public in ways that are accessible, comprehensible and relevant to their everyday lives" (18).

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The value of these archaeology and education projects is that they actualise many of the ideas and relations which have been the subject of the previous two chapters. They are a way of discovering what it means to have a consciousness of the past, and how changing this consciousness changes the way we think about ourselves in the present. It was when I started working with school children and trainee teachers, and facing their questions and concerns, that I started formulating the ideas which appear here under the heading of a post-colonial archaeology. As an experience it was refreshing and clarifying, just as it was salutary. It reminded me of just how much professional archaeology in this country misses, with the deep and debilitating divide between archaeology and society. I found myself wanting to drag my professional colleagues along on a field excursion - to say *this* is how archaeology might be done; this is how we are challenged.

The aim of the Archaeology Workshop was never simply to give a higher profile to archaeology, or to popularise hidden versions of pre-colonial history, but to change the way that archaeologists work. We wanted to change what it meant to "be" an archaeologist, or to "do" archaeology, by instilling a new set of priorities and concerns, and challenging archaeologists to redirect their energy and resources. Fundamental to this new way of doing archaeology is a new sense of audience, of accountability, and of disciplinary purpose. In the following chapter (Chapter 6, "Conclusion: Post-Colonial versus Neo-Colonial Archaeologies") I will explore these changes when I discuss the notion of a post-colonial archaeology in relation to some contemporary trends and developments.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION: POST-COLONIAL VERSUS NEO-COLONIAL ARCHAEOLOGIES.

In this final chapter I want to do three things. The first is to paint a picture of archaeology in South Africa as it presently exists. The narrative in Chapter 3 came to an end with the ending of apartheid and the period of transition 1990-1994. Here I want to update this by commenting on some of the emerging trends, features and events in archaeology in this country, as I read them.

The second thing which I want to do (which grows out of this) is to describe two forms or modes of archaeology which seem to me either to be emerging, or to have the potential to emerge, out of the present crisis of colonialist archaeology in South Africa. The first is a post-colonial archaeology. But the second is what I want to call a neo-colonial archaeology. Both conceptually and in terms of their social and political implications I have characterised these as being, in important respects, opposed forms of archaeological practice.

Finally, I want to comment on a tension which has run like a thread throughout this project (just as it runs through life more generally in the Third World) - that is, the tension between hope and despair. Where (and indeed, how) does the notion of a post-colonial archaeology situate itself in the kinds of contexts described by Leys? What hope is there for a post-colonial archaeology set against the more general retreat of the discipline in Africa?

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Trends and Events in South African Archaeology.

I. The Privatisation of Archaeology.

The first trend that I want to comment on is what we might call the privatisation of archaeology in South Africa. The decade since the late 1980s has seen the expansion of opportunities for archaeologists in the private sector, to the point where this has become the single largest source of research funding (see subsequent review). At a conceptual level the importance of this development is that it represents a move away from Inskeep's notion of a museum- and

university-based archaeology reliant on public-sector funding, which was the model structuring archaeological practice through the 1970s and 1980s. There is a certain irony - and a certain inevitability - about the fact that this move to the market-place has coincided with the transfer of state power and the move away from apartheid. In this review I examine the implications of the two principle instances of privatisation - Contract Archaeology and tourism and archaeology - for the notion of a post-colonial archaeology.

Contract Archaeology.

Contract archaeology (CA) has had a relatively late development in South Africa. Martin Hall contributes a guest editorial to the *Archaeological Bulletin* of December 1989 (SAAB 44: 63-4, "Contract Archaeology in South Africa"). He begins:

Contract archaeology - where the archaeologist works, for a professional fee, within an agreement with an architect, planner, government department, municipal agency or the like - is an exciting new concept in this country. (63)

At the time of writing the universities of Cape Town and the Witwatersrand had contract divisions attached to their departments of archaeology, and departments of archaeology at the universities of Stellenbosch and Pretoria were undertaking contracts, as were a number of archaeologists working from the museums. Hall was working in a period of considerable excitement about the potential of Contract Archaeology. He notes that already the financial turnover of university-linked contracts divisions was higher than the research funding that they received from the Human Science Research Council, their previous main benefactor. As such Hall's purpose is a salutary one, prompted by the visit to South Africa in March/April of that year of Dave Frederickson of Sanoma State University in California, an archaeologist with a considerable experience of the Contracts scene in the US. Frederickson described a scenario in which readily available federal money had led to the proliferation of private agencies, some of them staffed "by second-rate archaeology graduates whose only interest was maximum profit"(63). The result had been a division in the discipline - "if a person was involved with CRM, then they could not be good enough for "pure" research (63). The message that Frederickson stressed repeatedly in his lectures and seminars was that "archaeologists in South Africa have the opportunity to avoid the North America mess" (63).

For Hall the central issue is control, both over accreditation and over practice. With regard to the former he recommends the formation of a professional body of Contract Archaeologists, separate from both the South African Archaeological Society and the Southern African Association of Archaeologists. Such a body would accredit practitioners (especially the Principal Investigator), and oversee professional standards. When it comes to control over practice the role of an independent statutory body like the National Monuments Council becomes central since it would "clearly be invidious for an organization representing either clients or contractors to set the rules of practice and ensure that they were followed" (64).

In particular, Hall identifies three issues whose resolution he regards as crucial. The first is that no requirement existed that copies of reports resulting from Contracts activities be housed with the National Monuments Council. The second is that no restriction was currently built into the NMC permit system on the length of time that an archaeologist could restrict access by colleagues to the results of fieldwork (he recommends three years). The third issue concerns the relationship between regional data depositories and Contract Archaeologists. Should institutions have the right to "sell" information through their own Contracts divisions? Or should they be neutral parties, like the NMC?

I spoke to Tim Hart and Dave Halkett, archaeologists with a reputation as superb field workers who run one of the longest-standing and most successful Contracts operations in the country, the Archaeology Contracts Office (ACO), as a way of updating myself with developments in this sector¹. We began by talking about the background to their own involvement in Contract Archaeology. Hart and Halkett were approached separately by John Parkington and Martin Hall in 1987 to assist with CA projects. Fittingly it was a contract at the Castle in Cape Town - colonialism's most potent symbol in South Africa - which gave the initial fillip for the development of the ACO. This project had a troubled history of archaeological involvement, and a reluctant contractor in the form of the Public Works Department. It is to the credit of Hart and Halkett that they not only completed, but repeatedly extended the initial contract, staying on site for three years. By the time of its completion the Castle project had a fair claim to being the biggest excavation of its kind in the Southern Hemisphere.

¹. This interview took place in November 1997 in the Department of Archaeology tea-room at the University of Cape Town.

Contract Archaeology developed in the United States in the 1970s around the concept of cultural resource management, and about ten years later in Australia. A number of factors converged in the development of a local CA sector in South Africa in the late 1980s. The first of these was a more vocal environmental lobby, and an increased awareness on the part of developers of the value of commissioning surveys of this kind. The second was the partial recovery of business confidence at the end of the decade, and an increase in building development projects. However, the most important factor appears to have been anticipation within the discipline of new heritage and environmental legislation. This was duly passed as the Environment Conservation Act of 1989.

At the time CA was widely hailed as having the potential to remake archaeology in this country. For example, Hilary Deacon contributes a thoughtful editorial to the *SAAB* edition of June 1988, when the new legislation had been gazetted, which he titles "What future has archaeology in South Africa?". He begins by reviewing the history of employment in archaeology from the period of Goodwin, through the boom period of the 1960s and 1970s. He writes:

with the introduction of legislation providing for the conservation of the natural environment, a new demand for archaeological services will be made... The concept of the proposed legislation has potentially serious implications for archaeology in this country because impact statements, including those on cultural resources, will be required for development projects... South Africa is making a belated start in what is known elsewhere as cultural resource management or CRM. (3)

Deacon was writing in the context of the curtailment of government spending on the universities. He speculates that CRM might come to the rescue of archaeology and extend the boom:

Is archaeology entering another boom period as in the 1970s when there were posts to be filled? In the years following enactment of the new legislation, there may well be more jobs than graduates, but even if the demand evens out thereafter, archaeology in this country will be immeasurably stronger. (3)

Has Deacon's upbeat prediction come to pass? Hart and Halkett are both more cautious. According to Halkett one has to work harder to access funds through CA than through conventional funding channels. Apart from the archaeological aspects of the work - which are often challenging - one has to work to schedule, write reports quickly and budget correctly. They attribute their early success at the Castle to a greater professionalism of approach:

We did see the need for professionalism in terms of how we were working which up to that time was not something that the academics really thought about. (Halkett, pers. comm.)

On the other hand one of the remarkable features of the CA sector is the extent to which it has grown since the time when Hall and Deacon were writing. There are currently between eighteen and twenty CA outfits in the country, including museum departments, university departments, contracts divisions affiliated to university departments, and individual operators. While the majority may turn over five or six contracts a year, others like the National Cultural History Museum in Pretoria reportedly run on contracts. When I spoke to Hart and Halkett the ACO had seventeen current projects, and in their own words were swamped with work.

In our discussion Hart and Halkett frequently return to the opposition between CA and "academic" archaeology. I asked them about the nature of their insertion into an academic institution like the University of Cape Town. The ACO is affiliated to the Department of Archaeology at UCT, and Hart and Halkett's official designation is that of scientific officers. Fees earned by the ACO are paid into university coffers, but Hart and Halkett set their own salaries and the salaries of the two full-time workers in their employ. The relationship between the university and the contractors seems to be one of uneasy symbiosis. On the one hand there are obvious benefits to be gained from this association. Clients are reassured by an official connection. From a purely practical point of view there are benefits. They routinely make use of the services of post-graduate students and staff in the Department to bring material to the stage of full analysis. They have also benefited from an in-house arrangement with the Spatial Archaeology Research Unit (SARU), itself an important regional data depository. On the other hand they are disadvantaged by a lack of direct control over funds. In some ways the nature of the university places it at odds with the needs of business - it tends to be overly bureaucratic, slow to react. The agendas in such an institution are murkier, more complex - as much as anything Hart and Halkett fear falling foul of institutional politics.

There are real differences in the way that Contract Archaeologists work. While the basic methodology tends to be the same as excavations done purely for research purposes, there are obvious differences in terms of the speed at which one works, and if the site is to be destroyed, in terms of the amount of material which is removed. Halkett talks of struggling with this issue for many years, of still not being entirely happy with the mix.

Hart and Halkett talk of their changing perception of the nature of archaeological sites. Some sites which they would once have excavated - dutifully gathering every scrap - no longer seems worth the effort (certain types of shell middens fall into this category). Other, more nondescript sites, which might have passed academic attention, have yielded surprising results. Perhaps the major difference between CA and research-driven archaeology is that sites are not selected in the same way, but tend to come as part of a package, usually defined by area. Hart talks of getting "a shotgun blast of archaeology". This has resulted in significant research spin-offs as previously unmapped areas are explored through contract activities. An example of this is the archaeology of the Cape West Coast, which was previously largely confined to the area around Elands Bay as a result of an extensive research project initiated by John Parkington in the early 1970s. As contract-driven excavations have progressively explored the rest of the coast a markedly different pattern of settlement has been suggested north of the Olifants River. In this way CA activities have begun to influence research agendas in the Department. One of the more encouraging aspects of the symbiosis between the ACO and the Department is that a number of post-graduate projects have grown out of contract activities. Perhaps exceptionally, Hart and Halkett have a policy of giving out information (provided this is not embargoed by the client), although there is some information which they feel "possessive" about. If the information is going to other contractors they charge a fee.

Our conversation turns to the challenges facing CA, and Hart and Halkett talk of moves to regulate the industry. As the number of contractors has increased so has the recognition of the need to set in place controls. The idea of a professional body of Contract Archaeologists was first mooted at a meeting of the Southern African Association of Archaeologists in Cape Town in 1992. At a subsequent conference in Bloemfontein the Council of SA3 nominated an initial committee to get such a body off the ground (known as the CRM section of SA3). A follow-up meeting attended by Tom Huffman, Gavin Whitelaw, John Kaplan and Tim Hart was held in Cape Town early in 1997. The task of such a professional body would be to establish a common code of ethics, a fee structure, and a set of minimum standards. Hart talks of a "mission to maintain high standards of work and service". In the event of dispute members would need to agree to be subject to a review process, not only by the client body but by the archaeological profession at large. The review committee would comprise of the members of the professional body who would have the right to co-opt representatives from the National Monuments Council and the museums and academic departments. An additional

proposal is that all reports be subject to a third-party referee. Hart and Halkett talk of the danger of "sweet-heart" reports. Although they have not been approached directly they are well aware of the possibility of ethical abuse.

Like all such activities where the client experiences an element of legal compulsion, CA exists in an interesting relationship to the legislation. Moves to establish a professional body are given an added impetus by the fact that a bill is currently before Parliament which is set to transform the heritage field. Called the Draft National Heritage Bill, it was commissioned by the Minister of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology who appointed a Writing Team in June 1996 to consult heritage legislation in other countries and local interest groups (J Deacon 1997). The Bill establishes a national system for the protection and management of national heritage under a National Heritage Council. The head offices of the National Monuments Council in Cape Town became SAHA, the South African Heritage Agency. The Bill addresses the issue of the legal ownership of archaeological artefacts. They become the property of the State, and may not be collected, bought or sold without a permit. It also requires that an assessment of archaeological resources be carried out prior to all development activities, including agriculture and mining.

There is anticipation within the CA sector that this Bill will greatly increase work opportunities. Hart and Halkett talk of the new Bill having the potential to change the nature of archaeology in this country by shifting the ratio between the percentage of material derived from Contract as opposed to non-Contract activities. Rather like the late-1980s, then, the CA sector finds itself poised in anticipation of major new legislation, and the implications of that legislation.

One of the implications, as Hart and Halkett see it, is the prospect of a shortage of trained personnel. They talk of their difficulty in finding people from amongst the plethora of archaeological post-graduates and junior staff who they can send into the field:

We are finding that even people with post-graduate training are coming into the field and they're not marketable from the CRM point of view. (Halkett pers. comm.)

They talk of the need for archaeologists to be "well-rounded" and "finished", but the word they use most often is "professional". Halkett says: "We have to start producing professional archaeologists". A professional archaeologist would need to have elements of business and management training. They would need a

grounding in personnel management, and a familiarity with the heritage legislation. They would need to know how to manage a cash-flow and a client. Hart and Halkett talk of starting a field school for post-graduates that would produce professionals who are able to move into the CA sector. Implicit in this is a criticism of university curriculum planners, who they say have not met the challenge of training students for contract work. Halkett talks of the need for a streaming process. One must not take away the choice of pursuing an academic line, "but those who want to go in as professionals need to receive the requisite training".

My attention is drawn to the language used by Halkett and Hart. Their use of the notion of "professionalism" both recalls and contrasts with an earlier usage of the term in an important series of exchanges in the discipline in the late 1960s and early 1970s. In these earlier exchanges the opposed terms were not "professional" versus "academic", but "professional" versus "amateur" - where the idea of amateurism became associated with that which was not sufficiently up-to-date or serious. In both cases the notion of "professionalism" is used to contest an existing idea of what archaeologists "do" or what they should "be" - that is, to contest central issues of meaning and identity. In the former case the new notion of professionalism signals a new phase in the discipline effectively inaugurated by Inskip, the phase of a professional (academic) museum- and university -based discipline. Hart and Halkett's use of the notion of professionalism, I want to suggest, signals its opposite - the movement into the market-place and its associated ideas of client service and good business practice. I will discuss the broader implications of this shift in a subsequent part of this chapter. For the moment what I want to comment on is its implications for what we might call the "economy in information" which operates around Contract Archaeology - that is, the way in which information moves and is exchanged, where it stops or disappears.

Halkett identifies as the single biggest challenge facing CA the difficulty in "getting the information out to a wider audience". Their experience is that it is very difficult to get the time to work things up to publication:

You finish one job , you write it up for contract purposes, and then you're onto the next thing somewhere else in the country, and its difficult to maintain an interest in that beyond the duration of the project. (Halkett pers. comm.)

Or again:

We recognise that as a problem. We need to be getting that information out, but we need to figure out a way of getting the time, getting the cash to tide us over.

In this respect Halkett is not sure that we are not repeating the "mess" in the early years of CA in the United States which Frederickson was referring to.

And it is here that I want to pause to examine the implications of CA for the notion of a post-colonial archaeology. For it seems to me that the crucial element which is lacking from Hart and Halkett's description of the sector (which I accept as an honest and accurate description) is a notion of archaeology being set in a broader, specifically social context. The whole idea of Contract Archaeology is predicated on a privately negotiated contract between the client or developer and the contractor or archaeologist. The contractor in turn is ethically bound to mediate between the interests of the developer, and the archaeological or conservation interests which pertain to the material. The forms of value which come under consideration with respect to archaeological activities are commercial value, conservation value and research value. Nowhere in this relationship is there space for the idea of social value, other than through the most vaguely predicated notion of "heritage" (We are preserving these remains for the future generations, or for the general good).

So that I want to suggest that Hart and Halkett are prevented from "getting the information out" because the rules of engagement of Contract Archaeology disallows it - if you like, because the discourse of Contract Archaeology disallows it; or at least, because it disallows it in its current formulation. As I read it, the challenge facing responsible CA operators like Hart and Halkett (and the professional body which will come to represent them) will be in finding ways of working around the discourse of Contract Archaeology - a discourse with its own particular history and set of exclusions - to find the popular audience which has so far evaded archaeology in this country. In failing to "get the information out" they are both perpetuating and adding a new dimension to the marginalization of archaeology in a public consciousness of the past.

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Tourism and Archaeology at Bushman's Kloof.

I first visited Bushman's kloof as a student in the late 1980s. At the time it still carried its old name, the less romantic "Boontjieskloof". I remember it as an instantly appealing place - a more-or-less abandoned farm set in a series of interlocking valleys on the far side of the Cederberg mountains. Our purpose in going there was to conduct a rock art survey. This was to become an annual event, involving twenty-or-so people walking over the landscape and systematically searching rock shelters and overhangs for traces of painting. The area excels from this point of view. The Boontjies River valley forms a kind of natural treasure-house of art. Almost every shelter and paintable surface bears the marks of the gathering and hunting people who lived there at one time.

What I remember about that trip, besides the beauty and expressiveness of the rock art, was the tremendously appealing air of dereliction which hung about the place. The land is at best marginal from an agricultural point of view, and the farm had seen a succession of owners over the years. The current owner, Mr Van Zyl, was rumoured to be in trouble with the bank. Rusting sheds, abandoned cars and untended fields spoke of a variety of unsuccessful enterprises. We bunked-down in an old potato packing-shed. I remember eating oranges in an abandoned orchard. Over the weeks, as the fruit ripened, it fell in heaps to the ground. We took our evening baths in the river and ran to get dry in the dying light of the sun, towels flapping behind us. At the time, I remember, Boontjieskloof seemed like some childhood kingdom magically held intact.

My second visit to the farm came early in 1995 when I again found myself in the Clanwilliam district, and it could hardly have been in greater contrast. The first change was a formidable fence and gate. A sign warned against trespassers. As we approached the homestead the changes came thick and fast. The ploughed fields had been put to grass. The rusty sheds and wrecked cars were gone, and in their place was an imposing set of buildings of white plaster and thatch. The river had been dammed, and the orchard where I had eaten my oranges was now a glittering lawn sweeping down to the water's edge. The transformation was complete. This was Bushmans Kloof, wilderness reserve, luxury game lodge and conference centre - and the rock art which we had viewed so innocently on my first visit now found itself in an altogether different context.

In compiling the following description of tourism and archaeology at Bushmans Kloof I have made use of a number of sources. I spoke to the people in the Department of Archaeology at the University of Cape Town most closely

connected with the events at Bushmanskloof². On a third visit to Bushmans Kloof I spoke to the farm's new owners, Bill McAdam and his son, Mark, who acts as General Manager. Particularly useful has been the promotional material from Bushmans Kloof (including a news-letter called "San-script") for it is here that the enterprise presents itself as it sees itself, and as it would most like to be seen.

Not long after my first visit the bank foreclosed on Van Zyl and the farm was put up for sale. An attempt was made by the Department of Archaeology at UCT acting through the Spatial Archaeology Research Institute to acquire the land as a rock art reserve, but the initiative failed. The idea was that the farm should be set aside for research and conservation purposes, and as a means of securing its unique rock art sites. Instead it was acquired by the McAdam family trading under the name of "MBM Farming Partnerships". The links to corporate businesses are direct. Bill McAdam is Executive Chairman of the Board of Executors, one of the city's larger financial houses. They were attracted by the idea of establishing a game lodge and wilderness reserve three hours from Cape Town in a malaria-free area. At the same time they recognised the potential of the farm's rock art resources in giving a unique edge to the enterprise. Rock art images feature heavily in the marketing of Bushmans Kloof and in its promotional material. The latter carry a quotation in bold from John Hanks, Chief Executive of the World Wildlife Fund (South Africa), to the effect that: "The priceless natural and cultural historical heritage at Bushmans Kloof is in the form of numerous pristine rock paintings". In a nice example of imaginative reciprocity similar rock art images decorate the Board of Executors annual financial reports.

Bushmans Kloof opened its doors in late 1995. It accommodates twenty guests in ten lodges. It also has a conference centre, sauna, billiard room, swimming pool and private library. At the time of writing its rates stood at between R650 - R980 per person per night sharing (this includes brunch, dinner, a "rock art walk" and a game drive). The idea of luxury is important. It describes itself as "an exclusive luxury retreat", and boasts of offering "five star luxury amidst the wilderness". One of its promotional brochures ("Bushmans Kloof: An Oasis in the Wilderness") gives a suggested format for a two-night stay. This takes the form of a late-afternoon arrival, and time to relax and freshen up ("guests can enjoy a swim in the rock pool in front of the lodges"), followed by an evening game drive and *cordon bleu* dinner. The next day begins with tea in the outdoor pub and entertainment area ("Spanners Bar"). The morning is taken up with a guided walk

². Tony Manhire was particularly useful in this regard, although he asked that it be placed on record that his views may differ substantially from my own.

to view Bushman rock art sites, followed by an afternoon of rest and a *cordon bleu* dinner, and so on. The same pamphlet assures us that "After the cosmopolitan atmosphere of Cape Town, Bushman's Kloof offers a taste of what the visitor is more likely to expect from Africa".

One of the themes which most strongly informs the Bushmans Kloof experience is the idea of going back in time. "Bushmans Kloof: An Oasis in the Wilderness" describes the route to the reserve:

A few miles after Clanwilliam, the tarred road turns to dirt and the real adventure begins. The road winds over the Pakhuis Pass between giant, towering orange boulders before dropping down to the turnoff for the game reserve. A few kilometers after the turnoff, the visitor passes through the first gate, giving the impression of entering some kind of Jurassic Park.

A further brochure is entitled "Rebirth of a Long Forgotten Land". It states:

For many generations the San reveled in the prolific supplied of game at Bushmans Kloof, recording their exploits in over 125 remarkable rock painting sites. From the mid 19th century, however, indiscriminate hunting by settlers, and wasteful farming methods destroyed the soul of Bushmans Kloof leaving it a mere shadow of its former self.

It goes on to describe the "Bushmans Kloof rebirth programme" which "has brought many species of wildlife back to the land their forebears once roamed" (this is in a section called "The Homecoming"). These species include Gemsbok, Red Hartebeest, Grey Rhebok, Eland, Springbok, Black Wildebeest, Bontebok, and so on.

What I find fascinating about Bushmans Kloof is the way in which a cultivated landscape has been taken and pushed back to an imagined past. One of the nicer ironies of my later visits lay in the remodeling of the original homestead. The farmer who built it had striven for a feeling of modernity in the smart contemporary bungalow which he erected. This has been demolished to make way for something which was felt to be more fitting to the kind of carefully manicured rusticity of the place. In the process of this "pushing back" a kind of fantasy, or fiction is created - and it is in the context of this fiction that the rock art of Bushmans Kloof is being viewed and interpreted.

Thus it seems to me that the major issues around archaeology and tourism at Bushmans Kloof are twofold. On the one hand they concern the ideas which have informed the development of Bushmans Kloof and which provide the context

within which the rock art is viewed, which are ideas of primitiveness and "wild Africa". These ideas are problematic in that they constitute a regressive colonial fantasy, but there is more to it than that. For it seems to me that what such ideas exclude (besides the notion of modernity) is any place for African people themselves. They produce essentially depopulated landscapes, or landscapes which are repopulated with wild game. In the most literal way this has led to farm removals as more and more land around the country is turned over to wildlife reserve and safari uses (although this has not happened at Bushmans Kloof). What managers like the McAdams realise is that the tourists who visit such destinations are demanding pristine landscapes, which are at the same time landscapes in which African people have no part - other than in the role of primitive curiosities, as at the nearby Kagga Kamma - a fact which I regard as enormously sinister. For rock art to appear in such a nexus seems to me to beg a host of questions. What are the visitors to Bushmans Kloof "seeing" in the rock art of the Boontjies River valley? And what kinds of connections do they make with the carefully reconstructed landscape around them?

The second issue concerns access. The rock art of Bushmans Kloof has been placed beyond the reach of all but the very wealthy. Mark McAdam talks frankly of his plans to turn Bushmans Kloof into a primarily foreign tourist destination. At the moment when the Department of Archaeology's bid to secure Bushmans Kloof as a rock art reserve failed it slipped from one form of inaccessibility (a white owned farm) to another and deeper form of inaccessibility. What meaning does a notion like "heritage" take in such a context? Can we reclaim a past in the absence of its physical referent?

It is with these question in mind that I want to consider a rather different project which comes from the same part of the world, from the other side of the Pakhuis Pass in the town of Clanwilliam³.

³. The case of Bushmans Kloof is not an isolated instance. According to a report in the "Open Africa" supplement of the *Mail and Guardian* (no. 20. July 1996. "Dig for the right time and place"): "Plans are afoot to put South Africa's neglected cultural heritage on show for overseas tourists" (1). These moves enjoy official sanction: "Initiated by the Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology, included in the recently launched White Paper on Tourism and enthusiastically embraced by the Ministry of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, archaeo-tourism has been punted by the department as a "unique experience that cannot be duplicated in museums of the classrooms"". The report quotes the University of Cape Town's Professor Andrew Sillen to the effect that: "South Africa has an extraordinary record spanning the entire course of human history from its origins to colonialism...But while these sites are well known by academics, their commercial possibilities have not yet been realise" (1).

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II. The Clanwilliam Living Landscape Project.

The issue of access to rock art sites is not unique to Bushmans Kloof. The vast majority of rock art sites in the Cederberg are on white-owned farms, and there is no legal compulsion acting on farmers to open their gates. For the academics who work at these sites access has always been provisional, negotiated and insecure. One project which has begun to think about both the issue of access, and about how rock art can be used in very different ways to the tourism and archaeology uses at Bushmans Kloof, is the Clanwilliam Living Landscape Project. I interviewed John Parkington, the moving force behind the project, who also passed on to me a document headed "A proposal to re-situate the museum into the landscape and use it as the bases of an integrated school curriculum" (1997).

The Living Landscape Project describes itself as a "community-based museum and schools curriculum project". Its objective is:

to use the local landscape as a framework for integrating the learning process and for reconnecting... the descendants of indigenous people with a past from which colonialism has largely severed them. It... seeks to empower people by establishing an accessible archive of historical, archaeological and environmental information... (1)

The Clanwilliam landscape is well-suited to such use, since it "is richly endowed with remains of past social and natural histories". These include geological remains (which reflect "the momentous events of glacial action, dramatic mountain building and the fossil record of previous life forms"), archaeological remains including rock paintings and rock shelter sites, and historical remains ("buildings and other residues of farming and agriculture that document a rapidly changing social landscape" 1997: 2).

At the heart of the proposal lies an innovative idea to fragment the traditional notion of a museum by establishing a series of structures at chosen sites in the landscape which will act as "learning places, resource centres and research opportunities" (2). The exact design of the structures is unclear, but each will be site- and content- specific. To quote from the proposal:

The structure envisaged will be a durable and flexible design that will unfold to provide vertical and horizontal frameworks for maps, texts for demonstration, spatial diagrams that underpin explanations. Stone surfaces act as path and inscription. Wooden panels serve as working surfaces and stage. Elements are slid, opened, joined or unfolded as blackboards, backdrops, shelves, tables, tablets. After each visit they can be shut up and enclosed for the next. (8)

Topics and activities to be covered by such learning places include the following: a structure for the display and dissection of local fynbos vegetation, a structure which illustrates and explicates rock paintings, a structure located at an in-situ fossil trench, and a structures which explores the change between the fynbos and the surrounding Karoo ecotone.

A second innovative suggestion in the proposal is to integrate the learning opportunities afforded by such structures into the school curriculum. Local teachers are reportedly enthusiastic about using the structures and their resources to teach a range of subjects, including botany, map-reading, local heritage and geomorphology. The interactive, object-based nature of the displays becomes important from this point of view. The proposal talks of the "dramatic remnants of past life" on the Clanwilliam landscape, and continues: "It is our conviction that these fragments are the hooks upon which to hang a curriculum that will grab the attention of local children and make learning relevant and fun" (9).

More broadly, the project is about reclaiming a heritage and an identity denied by colonialism. As the document puts it, "Histories have been denied, languages have been lost, cultural identities have been denigrated" (2). It states:

We see the fossils, the rock art, the place names, the plant and animal communities, the rock record and the ruined buildings as traces of the past, reflections of what was, and practical opportunities to re-learn , re-claim and re-habilitate. (2)

One way to reclaim and rehabilitate the past is through the repatriation of research materials derived from the area. As important as the educational aims of the Living Landscape Project is the proposal to use it as an opportunity to return archaeological (and other) research materials held in collections in the University of Cape Town. The first steps in the implementation of the project have been taken with the purchase of a former primary school premises strategically situated between the white and Coloured towns of Clanwilliam as a University of Cape Town field station. Called the Krakadouw Centre, this will act as an

organisational hub of the project, and an information archive which will include visual, artefactual and electronic resources "regularly supported by visits from interested researchers from Cape Town" (4). Holding central place among these collections will be an archive of about 2000 rock art sites located, recorded and studied over the past 25 years by the Spatial Archaeology Research Unit. These will be returned to the Krakadouw Centre in the form of tracings maps and electronic site information. One of the aims in so doing is to set in place a system of conservation of the art which is under threat of damage. It is envisaged that local people will act as monitors of damage by "establishing a schedule of site visits that will detect damage and begin the process of reparation" (7).

The importance of the Clanwilliam Living Landscape Project, I want to suggest, lies in several directions. In the first place, as an innovative set of ideas around museum practice and school curriculum planning. In the second place, as a model for the university's involvement in local communities, and as a sustained outreach programme. And in the third place, as a model for the repatriation and archiving of research materials. At the same time it begins to address some of the questions raised by Bushmans Kloof, and in particular, central questions of landscape, context, meaning, and the ideas which inform the rock art. In a passage which I take to be the key thematic and conceptual statement in the proposal, Parkington writes:

In placing the exhibit back at the point of excavation and actual site of rock paintings, fossil remains and vegetation, a number of dialogues are encouraged. If objects are not removed from sites in which they are found but rather contextualised in place, or re-placed, then their display can be set off against their original condition. The immediate presentation is contrasted with a deep geographical and historical past. This rediscovery is a continuous dialogue between natural and artificial, containment and release, near and far, then and now. (2-3)

It also begins to address the issue of access in interesting ways. Indeed, the issue of access is the one around which the Clanwilliam Living Landscape project will stand or fall. The school parties and rock art monitors are no more assured of access to sites on white-owned farms than at any point in the past, so that, in a sense, the project is predicated on a situation which has not yet come to pass (the opening of access to sites), both anticipation and evading its central issue. What it does do is to empower a local community to assert its rights to landscape and heritage resources, and in so doing, to draw local farmers into an emerging set of pressures around the issue of access at a community level - rather than simply shutting the gate as at Bushmans Kloof.

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III. The "Khoisan Conference" and the Politics of Identity.

One of the interesting trends in South African political life in the years since the dismantling of apartheid has been an increasing popular mobilisation around notions of ethnic identity - where such identities are rooted in specifically historical (and archaeological) contexts. This has been especially challenging for South African academics, for whom the notion of ethnicity remains problematically associated with the politics of apartheid. I examine an important recent instance in which academics and community representatives came together around some of these ideas.

The full title of the conference organised by the Institute for Historical Research at the University of the Western Cape, and held at the South African Museum between 12-16 July 1997, was the "Conference on Khoisan Identities and Cultural Heritage". The initial idea was "to create a forum that would make the results of academic research on the Khoisan known to people of Khoisan descent who would not normally attend an academic meeting". However, it soon became apparent that "people of Khoisan descent wanted to be full partners in the conference by contributing as well as learning"⁴. The conference attracted 258 "academic" conference delegates, including a sizable international contingent, but they were outnumbered in every session by delegates of Khoisan descent. Upwards of 800 people attended the opening festivities. A further feature of the conference was the widespread media attention which it attracted. It was the most important event of its kind to date (a previous meeting on Khoisan languages, history and archaeology was held in Tutzing, Germany, in July 1994), and probably the most important single event on the local archaeological calendar for 1997.

The conference included elements of carnival. The morning of the 12 July began with the ritual slaughtering of two sheep and a ceremony to celebrate the investiture of Abraham Stockenstroom Le Fleur as Paramount Chief of the

⁴. This is from a report on the conference commissioned by the organizing committee. It was passed on to me by Janette Deacon who sat on this committee as a representative of the National Monuments Council. I interviewed Janette Deacon and John Gribble at the NMC head-quarters in Cape Town in November 1997.

Griquas, and the rites of passage of a young Griqua woman from Kimberley. Le Fleur was then conveyed up Government Avenue by horse-drawn carriage, accompanied by the Chiefs and Chieftainesses of other Khoisan groups, a Griqua choir, and a large crowd of followers, many of them in versions of traditional dress. At the South African Museum they were welcomed by the flamboyant Joseph Little, self-styled chief of the Hamcumqua, who introduced the speakers, choirs and dignitaries.

Conference participants from South Africa included representatives from the Cape Cultural Heritage Development Council, the Khoisan Representative Council, the Griquas of Adam Kok V, the Baanbrekersraad of East Griqualand, the Griqua National Conference, the Namas of the Richtersveld and Steinkopf, the #Khomani people of the Kalahari, the !Xu and Khwe Trust based at Schmidtsdrift, the community of Mier, and the Karretjiemense of the Karroo (this last is a group of itinerant farm labourers who travel the by-roads of the Karroo by donkey-drawn cart in search of work. "Karretjiemense" translates as "people of the little wagons"). Organisations from outside South Africa included the Working Group for Indigenous Minorities in Southern Africa (WIMSA), the Ju/'hoan foundation, the Kuru Development Trust, and the Rehoboth Basters.

There was a fine irony in the choice of venue for the plenary sessions. This was the Dutch Reformed Church Synod Hall alongside the South African Museum, a bastion of Afrikaner Calvinist values. In 1913 the Cape Synod of the Dutch Reformed Church debated whether the San could be regarded as members of the human race. Even five years ago people of Khoisan descent would have been barred from entry.

The conference included sessions on rock art, linguistics, archaeology, history, and contemporary Khoisan sociology. Probably the most significant session occurred on the afternoon of the first day when representatives of the various Khoisan interest groups presented discussion papers in a "Khoisan Forum" attended by over 500 people. Among the issues discussed were those of obtaining so-called First Nation status for Khoisan people, the issues of nurturing and reviving Khoisan languages, and the issue of obtaining support for land claims and against threatened land evictions. In particular, this and other sessions highlighted three immediate threats facing Khoisan groups in Southern Africa. The first of these is the eviction of G/wi and G//ana people from the Central Kalahari Game Reserve in Botswana, an area which they have occupied for over 8000 years. At the time of the conference 500 of the 1500 Bushmen living there had been moved. The Botswana government claims that this is not a forced removal,

but Bushman representatives have alleged that the government is slowly cutting off services inside the reserve leaving them no choice but to move. The caravans used as schools have been towed away, clinics closed down, and the special hunting rights of the Bushmen revoked. Because the Botswana government is nervous about the international implications of the Kalahari removals they have placed a moratorium on foreign researchers working in the area, since they claim that it is they who "incite" the Bushmen to protest - a move which Melanie Gosling, author of a report in the *Cape Times* (July 21, 1997, "Southern Africa's unwanted people"), wryly notes as being "reminiscent of government attitudes in apartheid South Africa".

In Namibia the government plans to remove 6000 Bushmen from the area of the West Caprivi, ostensibly so that extensions to a prison rehabilitation centre can be built. The Khwe stand to lose an annual income of R100 000 from existing eco-tourism projects, and are taking the matter to court. In South Africa attention was focused on the plight of 4000 !Xu and Khwe living in limbo in a tattered tent town in Schmidtsdrift, where they were settled by the former South African Defence Force. After the Tswana-speaking Batlaping won a land claim for the Schmidtsdrift land (from whence they had been forcibly removed), a nearby farm, Platfontein, was bought for the Schmidtsdrift inhabitants by the !Xu and Khwe Trust with land restitution grants from national government. However, in a further twist, the Bushman groups were prevented from taking occupation of this land by an illegal local government moratorium. The moratorium has since been lifted, but at the time of the conference there had been no action to get on with the move. !Xu and Khwe representatives were reportedly told by the premier of the province, Manne Dipico, that he cannot start with infrastructure at Platfontein "as the needs of the Tswanas come first"⁵.

Meanwhile, in a separate development, the Griqua community of Douglas are claiming 20 000 hectares of the Schmidtsdrift farm, an area which they call "Fonteintjie". In their dispute with the Batlaping they have joined forces with the Bushmen of Schmidtsdrift. According to Griqua representative, Isak van Nel: "The San people are our brothers and we will stand by them through thick and thin"⁶. A specifically archaeological justification was given to their claim by another Griqua representative, William Wellen, when he reportedly said that his people had

⁵. See the Melanie Gosling report of July 21, 1997. Also see a report by Gosling in the *Cape Times* of July 16, 1997 ("Persecution continues for Southern Africa's San people").

⁶. Reported in the *Cape Argus* (June 21, 1997), "Griqua and San to march on Parliament".

uncovered 132 Griqua graves on Fonteintjie, "proving that we were once settled on the land".

In the events of the Khoisan Conference and in the disputes around land to which they referred, the central issue was the issue of identity, and the debates, conflicts and struggles which took place around this notion. In this, the Khoisan Conference represented a continuation of the concerns of a previous event which had taken place within the precincts of the Company Gardens in Cape Town, Pippa Skotnes's "Miscast" exhibition. Then, as in this case, it is clear that such discussions around the notion of identity are as much about negotiating a place in a post-apartheid South Africa, as they are about reclaiming a lost heritage or past. A report on the conference carried in the Afrikaans weekly, the *Rapport* (July 20, 1997), headed "A People... in search of their yesterdays", begins with the line: "A people without a past is a people without a future..."⁷. It also quotes a useful characterisation of this process by Alan Barnard of the University of Edinburgh, who calls it the "reconstruction of Khoisan identities".

At the same time such notions of collective identity are problematic and challenging. One is confronted by the shifting, provisional and contested nature of identities based on ethnicity. Philip Tobias delivered the conference's opening address in which he problematised notions of race, racial classification, and the terms Khoisan, Khoekhoe and San. The conference also featured a dispute over paramountcy, reported in *Die Burger* July 16, 1997 ("Grikwas in conflict over paramountcy")⁸. In contention were Andrew Le Fleur of the Griqua National Conference, and Adam Kok V, a lineal descendent of the historical Griqua leader Adam Kok I. The dispute emerged when Martin Engelbrecht of the Khoisan Representative Council claimed that Kok was recognised by the Grikwas of the Northern Cape as their leader. Representatives of the Griqua National Conference responded by expressing reservations about Kok to *Die Burger*, and coming out in support of Le Fleur. In a follow-up to the conference Adam Kok V undertook a "royal tour" of the Western Cape during which he met business and local government leaders and spoke on a radio talk show (reported in the *Sunday Times*, August 17 1997, under the inevitable title of "King Adam: A Kok and bull story?").

Again, I want to suggest that the notion of identity as it appears in these disputes is not so much about genealogies and the facts of cultural history, as it is about

7. "'n Volk... op soek na sy gisters". The opening line appears as: "'n Volk sonder 'n verlede is 'n volk sonder 'n toekomst...".

8. "Grikwas stry oor wie opperhoof is". *Die Burger* translates as "The Citizen".

strategic allegiances and the prerogatives of cultural choice. As Emil Boonzaier of the University of Cape Town puts it, "There's no copyright on ethnic identity"⁹. A further observation concerns the double-sided nature of such claims - or rather, the fact that there are two aspects to such claims to an identity rooted in a shared past, which are not necessarily co-extensive. On the one hand there is what Janette Deacon was referring to when she stated that she hoped that the conference "would help to instill a sense of heritage and pride in Khoisan communities". That is, a reference to the cultural and intellectual value of a sense of the past¹⁰.

The second aspect of such claims to ethnic identity is their role in mobilising support for political projects in the present - a more activist sense of the notion of identity. It was around this aspect of the notion of identity that most of the community representatives were meeting at the Khoisan Conference - in fact, the delegates could have been divided neatly into two camps according to which aspect of the notion of identity they were using, the "academic" or the "activist", the outsider or the insider, the theoretically constituted or the politically engaged. A final coda to the Khoisan Conference was a challenge to the academics who made up a section of the audience. Mathambo Ngakaeaja, a representative of the Kuru Development Trust in Botswana, accused academics of steering clear of contentious subjects in their research on the Khoisan because they saw their relationship with the government as being more important. He reportedly said: "We must be one of the best-studied people in the world, but our socio-economic position is declining in spite of all the research"¹¹.

Two weeks after the Khoisan Conference representatives from San communities in South Africa, Namibia and Botswana, many of whom had been at the

⁹. Reported in the *Sunday Times* (2 November 1997), "Khoi leader demands copyright on tradition".

¹⁰. Deacon's comment is reported in the *Cape Times* (11 July 1997, "Bid to save heritage of SA's first people"). In the same vein Lionel Mtshali, Minister of Arts and Culture who opened the conference, said that the "reaffirmation of identities was important in the lives of all South Africans, including people of Khoisan descent". Mtshali reportedly "spoke in generalities and made no mention of government's response to calls for First Nation status or official recognition of Khoisan languages" (*Cape Times*, 14 July 1997, "Deprived Khoisan in official language bid").

¹¹. Report in the *Cape Times* July 16, 1997. Also see the comments of Samora Gaberone, commissioned by the Kalahari San to fight the removals. He told the conference: "In Botswana we have a crisis and the academics here have made no reference to that... It is very typical of academic opportunism, where [it is] their relationship with the government that matters".

conference, flew to Geneva to address the United Nations Working Group on Indigenous Populations. They formed part of a 600-strong delegation representing more than 200 minority and indigenous groups across the world, and are reportedly leading an all-Africa initiative to unite the forces of minority indigenous people. In some ways this forms a satisfying conclusion to the events of the Khoisan Conference - although commentators have noted that appeals for First Nation recognition in South Africa are unlikely to succeed without a paradigm shift in government thinking. Ironically, this is due to the reluctance of South African politicians and policy-makers to grapple with the notion of ethnic identity in the wake of apartheid. Inevitably, the politics of identity sound a key note, not only in disputes about the past (and in the academic practices which focus on the past), but in access to land, resources and representation in the present.

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IV. Education Under Review.

Of all the areas of South African life in the post-apartheid period it is above all the field of education which has come to exemplify both its hopes and disappointments, its achievements and frustrations. Not that this is surprising, for so much is at stake - laying a firm foundation for the future, or storing up trouble for the years ahead. In this section I take up the discussion where I left off in Chapter 5, by discussing the process of curriculum review in South African primary and secondary education since approximately 1990. In particular, I look at this process in as far as it affects archaeology - and since archaeology has never appeared as such in the South African school curriculum - history.

In preparing this account I benefited from lengthy discussions with Rob Sieborger of the Faculty of Education at the University of Cape Town (in February 1998), and June Bam, then attached to the Institute for Historical Research at the University of the Western Cape (in November 1997). They have both been close to the process of curriculum review. Sieborger represented the South African Society for History Teaching on the Human and Social Sciences Learning Area Committee (LAC), and acted as chairperson of the committee from February 1997. He also sat on the Phase Committees and was a Reference Group member for the Technical Committee in February and March 1997. Bam likewise sat on the Human and Social Sciences LAC and was a Reference Group member. The timing of these interviews was important: December 1997 saw the

release of the poorest set of matric results since at least 1990¹². More disturbingly - and surprisingly for two individuals so personally and professionally committed to history education in South Africa - I found both Sieborger and Bam in a deeply pessimistic mood, from the sense that the disciplines of history and archaeology have little to look forward to in the current reorganization of general school education.

The process of school curriculum review in South Africa has been almost unbelievably complex. The prehistory of the current round of the process goes back to the mid-1980s and the emergence of a People's Education Movement. This was a popular, mass-based initiative which arose in opposition to apartheid education. Significantly, the notion of a People's History lay at the conceptual centre of People's Education. This was to be a form of history education which more fully represented the diversity of historical experience in South Africa - in particular in as far as it dealt with precolonial history and the history of struggle against apartheid, both of which had been expunged from official texts¹³. This prompted an official response via the formation of a history committee by the quasi-governmental Human Sciences Research Council in 1988. However, it reflected government policy in being "75% white, predominantly male and Afrikaans speaking" (1). Although the legitimacy of the committee was called into question by the National Education Coordinating Committee (NECC, itself a product of the crisis in education in the mid-1980s), Bam notes that it nevertheless put forward six recommendations for the construction of a new history curriculum which were a "radical departure" from the Christian National Education model of history teaching, in as far as they called for the involvement of "interested" parties, and requested "community-oriented" criteria for history teaching.

Post-1990 attempts were made to open-up the syllabus review process which until then had been in the hands of the Department of National Education - but not before the National Party government had got in first with a policy document headed "A Curriculum Model for Education in South Africa" (CUMSA). This was

¹². Matric is the final year of schooling in the South African education system (year 12).

¹³. The first part of this account of the curriculum review process is drawn from a paper by Bam titled "A Critique of the Interim History Curriculum for Schools" (first presented at the "Future of the Past" conference at the University of the Western Cape, 10-12 July 1996). With regard to a People's History she writes: "It is interesting to note that the Apartheid and Eurocentric History Curriculum was one of the core areas around which the People's Education movement was organised in the eighties" (4).

submitted by the Committee of Heads of Education Departments (CHED), as part of their Educational Renewal Strategy. It was in a spirit of opposition to the state's curriculum initiatives that a *"considerable number of academics and organisations identified with the progressive curriculum movement"* (2) came together in the National Education Policy Investigation (NEPI), to make proposals towards *"a new democratic curriculum policy for South Africa"* (2). The public expression of this process was a series of history curriculum conferences held in February, March and May 1992, at, respectively, the Universities of Natal, Cape Town and the Witwatersrand. Their intention was to give teachers and concerned academics the opportunity to participate through public debate in the shaping of policy proposals. Within this same period the National Education Task Force (NETF), formed in late 1992, established a Curriculum Technical Sub-Committee (CTSC) *"to ensure that the government did not make any unilateral re-structuring of the curriculum prior to the period of political transition"* (3).

It was against this background of conflict and debate that the newly appointed Minister of Education, Sibusiso Bengu, initiated a process of curriculum review in the post-election period. In a series of press releases in August 1994 the public were invited to comment on *"essential alterations"* to the school syllabuses. These were conceived as short-term changes, and were bound by severe structural constraints from the start. The press releases went on to say that changes had to be made *"as quickly as possible which should not make it necessary to introduce new textbooks"* (3). Committees were convened under the auspices of the CTSC to review syllabi. Membership of these committees included heads of education departments, the unions and teacher organisations, although Bam notes that *"academic constituencies were glaringly absent"* (4). The history sub-committee met in September 1994 to consider over 100 submissions (including one from the Archaeology Workshop on behalf of the staff and students of the Department of Archaeology at the University of Cape Town). The recommendations of this committee were taken to Phase Committees (junior primary, senior primary and secondary), and then to the Interim Committee of Heads of Education Departments (ICHED). The result was the interim core syllabus for standards 2-7, and standards 8-10.

Partly as a result of the structural constraints with which it set out, but also because of the narrow interpretation of its brief, and because of resistance from apartheid functionaries who continued in place, the interim core syllabi were widely felt to be unsatisfactory. Bam notes that the old core syllabi remained substantially in place, with *"negotiated"* new content. She characterises the

process as a "quick fix", and a "technocratic" solution, which largely failed to achieve even the limited aims which it set itself.

The NETF process was conceived as a limited intervention, driven by the political need to show quick results in the field of curriculum reform. Moves towards a more comprehensive curriculum review process began with a proposal by the CTSC in June 1995 that curriculum work be brought under a National Institute of Curriculum Development (NICD). This quickly evolved into an ambitious curriculum review process, and an attempt not so much to reform as to re-envision the field of primary and secondary education. In particular, it involved a shift in educational philosophy towards so-called outcomes based education (OBE). To some extent this was a process of re-labeling. The old "standards" and divisions into primary, secondary and tertiary phases were replaced by a foundation phase, an intermediate phase and a senior phase in General Education and Training (GET, constituting years 1 to 9), and by Further Education and Training (FET). Degrees, diplomas and professional qualifications are covered by Higher Education and Training. However, this was accompanied by a deeper reorganisation. One of the first things to fall away were the traditional "subjects", to be replaced by learning areas (LAs) with specific focuses. No less important was the conceptual reorientation away from content, towards skills and outcomes¹⁴.

The process of curriculum review was phrased within this new discourse. It began with the setting up of Learning Area Committees (LACs) around the eight learning areas: Communication and Language; Human and Social Sciences; Technology; Numeracy and Mathematics; Physical and Natural Sciences; Arts and Culture; Economic and Management Sciences; and Life Orientation. History is represented under the Human and Social Sciences. Some disciplines, like geography, were split between two or more LACs (Human and Social Sciences, and Physical and Natural Sciences). The LACs were handed responsibility for writing "outcomes", assessment criteria and "range statements" for each LA. Range statements are intended to give an idea of the content through which skills may be imparted. They appear in the final curriculum as lists of suggested topics and subjects for discussion. The work of the Human and Social Sciences LAC was handed over to a Technical Committee in February 1997. This committee sat for four weeks, drafting a discussion document on outcomes, assessment criteria and range statements. The Technical Committee consisted of fifteen paid

¹⁴. See Sieborger's paper "How the Outcomes Came Out" (1997) for a description of the process leading to Curriculum 2005.

members (appointed by the Minister), and had the support of a Reference Group whose members were nominated by the LAC. It also interacted with Phase Committees, set up to consider the implications of the new curriculum framework at each level.

The culminating moment of this stage of the process came when the Minister of Education launched "Curriculum 2005" from the steps of Parliament on 24 March 1997. In his speech on the occasion he predicted that:

The passivity of the learners of the past will be replaced by the activity of the learners of the future. Learners will have greater self-esteem because they will be allowed to develop at their own pace. They will be trained to work effectively in groups and will learn the value of teamwork and how to take responsibility for their own learning... Rote learning will make way for critical thinking, reasoning, reflection and action... Knowledge will be integrated, learning relevant and related to real-life situations. (4)¹⁵

The accompanying press release describes Curriculum 2005 as the first "truly national system of education and training", which "will ensure that the human resources and potential in our society are developed to the full" (1). At the centre of the new curriculum is the National Qualifications Framework (NQF), intended to provide a structure for the portability and recognition of qualifications. This in turn is closely related to the notion of "lifelong learning development", aimed in particular at the large number of adult learners forced out of GET before the completion of this phase of their education.

The mood of Bengu's announcement was upbeat and optimistic - so why the spirit of doom and gloom among those close to these developments (like Sieborger and Bam)? In the first place, there is unhappiness with the process itself. According to both commentators it was unduly rushed. Sieborger writes of the unspoken imperative behind the curriculum process: "A new curriculum had to be in place before the 1999 elections, as the government had to be seen to be delivering on its promises in education" (1997: 1). This meant that:

from the start participants were presented with deadlines which they knew were impossible to achieve and the process was always constrained by severe time pressures and overly optimistic planning. (1)

¹⁵ S. Bengu, "Address from the Steps of Parliament on the Occasion of the Launch of Curriculum 2005 (24 March 1997).

At times this led to the process being arbitrary and inconclusive. Sieborger relates how the first activity of the LACs was to write a "rationale" for the learning area (this was intended "to define it and serve as a point of reference for the future development of outcomes"). It was to be drafted by a "drafting group", and the wording approved by the LAC as a whole. However, the only resources used in this activity were those present in the room on the afternoon, "with the result that the rationale for the Human and Social Sciences depends to a considerable extent on one particular available book, which belonged to one of the Dutch advisors present" (1). Nor could this be revised, as time did not allow it "and because, as... [the LAC] continued its work it became impossible to alter the rationale on which the outcomes were being based" (1).

Another result of such time constraints was the lack of stakeholder representation and transparency. Although provincial departments and teacher organisations were informed and reported-back-to concerning the activities of the LAC, "there was never the time or the mechanism for their comments and suggestions to be heard" (2). Sieborger writes that this "caused considerable unhappiness at provincial and local level" (1), and was expressed as a tension between the provinces and the national Department of Education. This was meant to be resolved in a Curriculum Management Committee, but spilled over into the work of the LACs, with representatives on the LACs aligning around provincial issues.

Sieborger writes of an inherent tension in the curriculum process between, on the one hand, a "strict adherence to stakeholder representation", and on the other hand, "the progressive diminution of broad representivity as time went on" (2). The Technical Committees, in particular, wielded inordinate power, and took significant decisions without seeking endorsement from other constituencies. Apparently it was explained to the Technical Committees that they were "responsible to the minister only" (3).

According to Sieborger the curriculum process suffered from lack of overall coordination at a high level, and was apt to drift. When the Human and Social Sciences LAC met at the end of 1996 they were tasked with writing "outcomes", without being told how many to produce: "Lists of outcomes were drawn up, discussed in larger groups, revised, reformulated and circulated to others during LAC meetings" (4). By the end of November they had written literally hundreds of outcomes. In March 1997 these were reduced to sixty-six by the Technical Committee, and then to just nine specific outcomes for the Human and Social Sciences learning area. In the process much of the "texture and richness" of the original outcomes was lost. Among the previously foregrounded aspects of the LA

outcomes which were omitted from the final statement were "the analysis of past and contemporary issues; sustainability; empathy for people, culture and natural heritage; and continuity and change" (5). Sieborger writes:

if [the LACs]... had been told to restrict their outcomes to fewer than ten to start with, they would, arguably, have written better, more comprehensive outcomes than those later adopted. (4)

A further consequence of the lack of overall coordination was that key aspects of the work of the LACs were left unfinished or never embarked upon. In particular, this affected their work with respect to learning programmes which were never properly addressed (learning programmes are intended as a guide to teachers and describe "the contexts in which learners would encounter the outcomes" (7) - that is, they give an idea of content for each outcome). As a result "the pilot phase for Curriculum 2005 has very poorly defined learning programmes" (7). More embarrassingly, it meant that the goal posts for the final implementation of Curriculum 2005 kept being shifted. The first proposal for the implementation of the new curriculum in 1998 was to include Grades 1, 4, 7 and 10. This was amended in September 1997 to implementation in Grades 1, 4 and 7. In 1997 this was amended to Grades 1 and 7, and then to Grade 1 only. As it currently stands, the new curriculum will be implemented in full by the year 2003, followed by a two year review process.

Far more serious than these various problems with the process, however, has been the marginalization of history - and by implication, archaeology - in the new curriculum vision. This has come about not only through the loss of history as a "subject" in its own right, but through its further marginalization within the Human and Social Sciences learning area. Sieborger reports that if history previously occupied an average of 7-8% of a learner's time in school, it now occupies a maximum of 4% of the curriculum (pers. comm.). In fact, because teachers are given considerable lee-way in terms of the content used to arrive at particular outcomes, this figure is likely to be considerably less. Secondly, the move away from specifying content, and the weakness of learning programmes in the final document, make it unlikely that learners will come away with a coherent narrative account of South Africa's recent or more distant pasts. In a document of protest submitted to the minister on behalf of the South African Historical Society, Martin Legassick writes:

as matters stand it is possible that very little world history will be taught in the curriculum for General Education and Training, and that learners will be ignorant of even such major events as the World Wars. (3)¹⁶

The new curriculum shares with the old apartheid syllabi the tendency to repeat material: "There is also a danger that the historical content which is taught could be repeated year after year, as the range statements seem to suggest that" (3). More worrying is the decontextualization of skills in the new curriculum discourse, as though they float free of historical content: "historical skills cannot be successfully achieved outside a coherent historical context, which is at present lacking in the curriculum documents" (3).

More generally, the picture emerges whereby aspects of the historical and archaeological past which were marginalized under apartheid face the prospect of further marginalization in a post-apartheid school curriculum. Rather than notions of "redress" or "recovery", the official response manifested in Curriculum 2005 appears to be to pass over and suppress the knotty issues of South Africa's history.

I want to offer two keys to understanding what must, after all, be a surprising state of affairs, however one looks at it. The first is a prevailing technocratic vision in policy circles in education. It appears, for example, in a discourse which equates "education" with "skills" and "training", and manifests an impatience with disciplines like history which are unable to demonstrate a direct connection between them. In a further series of semantic slippages, notions of "skills" and "training" are in turn equated with "work" and "jobs". This technocratic language features heavily in the speech in which Sibusiso Bengu announced the arrival of Curriculum 2005. The "guiding vision" of the new curriculum "is that of a thinking, competent future citizen". Bengu continues: "Such a citizen will then form part of a skilled and competent workforce and will be an invaluable asset to our society" (2). The consequences of such a vision in education is that it implicitly undervalues the Human and Social Sciences for their lack of practical application. More specifically, it manifests as a wariness with those disciplines like history and archaeology which seek to dwell upon the past, thereby threatening to thrust the "competent future citizen" into all kinds of moral and epistemological dilemmas.

¹⁶. The title of this document is "Statement on the Implications for History Teaching in the Schools of Curriculum 2005". The version that I have is dated 20 November 1997. Martin Legassick is Professor of History at the University of the Western Cape.

Particularly instrumental in this new vision in education has been the alliance with big business interests. As Bam puts it:

Now its the world of work. Its production, its competence, its the new language of business and industry which has taken over. (pers. comm.)

The second key to understanding this situation, which follows on from this, is the capture of the process of curriculum development by a new set of groups, forces and interests, away from those parties who drove the People's Education and the NEPI processes. In particular, it saw the freezing-out of academics as a constituency, in favour of a cohort of government functionaries and bureaucrats, many of whom had played no direct role in the curriculum review process to date. For example, Bam writes of the NETF process leading to the interim core syllabi: "quite significantly, academic constituencies were glaringly absent. Those who were present [in the CTSC] represented organisational-ideological and not subject-curriculum interests" (4). Sieborger writes that the stakeholder principle which structured the Curriculum 2005 process operated at three hierarchical levels: at the top were the provinces and the national department. The secondary stakeholders were the teachers' organisations, each of which had two representatives. At a third level were NGOs, professional associations and colleges, universities and technikons. While at times this meant that the teacher organisations struggled to voice teacher concerns against the interests of the provinces, "It always meant that universities had very little say, in strong contrast to their former curriculum role under the Joint Matriculation Board" (2-3). All of the universities were represented by a single person nominated by the Committee of University Principals, itself ill-equipped to fulfill a stakeholder role.

In the process of this reorganisation of interests, many of the individuals who had played a key role in the process of history curriculum review in the 1980s and early 1990s have found themselves excluded from the new process, and surprisingly at odds with official policy. Bam tells an anecdote which perfectly - and painfully - captures this new balance of forces. At the "Future of the Past" conference convened at the University of the Western Cape in July 1996 by the Mayibuye Centre, the Institute for Historical Research and the History Department (UWC), a small group was mandated to meet with officials from the Department of Education. They were to express the concerns of the conference at the lack of transparency in the curriculum review process, and at the clear departures from the NEPI proposals. An additional concern were the rumours then circulating that history was to be dropped as a subject area in the curriculum. Bam, as a mandated representative, duly entered into a correspondence with Ihron

Rensburg, the chair of the National Curriculum Development Committee, and a meeting was set-up for early December. The other members of the delegation included Peter Kalloway, an educationalist and expert on the history of education in South Africa, and Ciraj Rassool, an historian from the University of the Western Cape.

On the appointed day they flew to Pretoria. The first set-back came when Ihron Rensburg could not be located by his staff, and they were offered a meeting with his deputy. At the insistence of the delegation further attempts were made to find Rensburg, who finally appeared. At this point an explanatory note is needed to properly set the scene. Rensburg, who is a pharmacist by training and has a background in the non-racial sport movement, has no prior links with education professionals or the curriculum review process. He presents himself, in Bam's words, as a "New African". On this occasion he appeared before the delegation (who all wore suits) in an Africa-print shirt, loudly affable and apparently relaxed. He reportedly refused to take questions or be drawn into discussion, instead launching into a lecture the import of which was that he represented a government which was the people's choice and therefore not to be questioned. He spoke of the new "marriage" between business and government, and of the need to look ahead and to leave behind this unhealthy fascination with the past. Deals were being made, which the actions of the delegation were serving to undermine. At the end of twenty minutes he excused himself, again refusing to take questions. In Bam's words:

The popular history movement of the 1980s was completely forgotten... the People's Education movement was also forgotten. (pers. comm.)

She reports in the wake of the meeting:

We were very sad, we were very disillusioned. Peter Kalloway gave up. Ciraj Rassool gave up. They all just became quiet. (pers. comm.)

Her succinct summation of the official position is: "Don't come to us with fossils and bones and graves... we're dealing with the rainbow" (pers. comm.).

By way of conclusion in this section I want to suggest that the challenges for archaeology in the field of education in South Africa remain surprisingly similar to those recognized and acted on by the Archaeology Workshop in the period prior to the current reorganization. These are: the need to design relevant and accessible media for use by teachers, with an eye for points of insertion into the

curriculum. In the second place there is the need for skills-upgrading workshops to allow in-service teachers to work with the existing range statements in creative ways. In the third place there is the need for programmes like the Archaeology Workshop which take their lead from the curriculum, but which also work in an extra-curricula way to insert a specifically archaeological component into a popular consciousness of the past.

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V. Plundering the Past.

The issue of the illegal trade in antiquities is not yet the problem in South Africa that it has become in other parts of Africa. The following review is included mainly because no discussion of the contemporary scene in archaeology in even a single part of Africa would be complete without it, but also because of its direct links with a subsequent discussion on the notion of neo-colonialism and archaeology.

The period following the exhibition and events of *Africa 95* has seen the publication of two works with remarkably similar titles. The first of these is a collection called *Plundering Africa's Past* (1996), edited by Peter Schmidt and Roderick McIntosh (based on the 1993 Carter Lectures at the Centre for African Studies, University of Florida). The second is a paper by Thurston Shaw called "The Contemporary Plundering of Africa's Past" (published in the *African Archaeological Review* 14(1), 1997). This was originally given as a lecture to the Royal African Society in May 1996. Both are concerned with the growing illegal trade in antiquities originating in Africa. Shaw writes:

in the last 20 years, in the course of changing fashions in the art world wealthy European and American collectors have increasingly moved in on the African field and have been prepared to pay fantastic sums for the things they lust after. (1)

The two works tell a tale of illegal excavations, the looting of national monuments, the theft of antiquities from museum collections in Africa (often with the complicity of the museum staff), of shady deals by collectors in the West, and the gallery owners, antiques journals and scientific facilities which assist them. Until recently the latter included the Oxford Research Laboratory for Art and Antiquities which performed thermoluminescent age determinations on looted West African terracottas at the request of dealers. The scale of the trade in contraband art is

such that UNESCO currently estimates its value at between two and six billion UK pounds (Shaw 1997).

The particular usefulness of Schmidt and McIntosh's collection is the manner in which it exposes the networks which support the covert trade. These range from peasant diggers, to dealers from nearby towns, to traffickers in the capitals, to owners of galleries in Europe (and to a lesser extent the US), to academics who are willing for a fee to provide letters of authentication and validation. Those close to the trade report that the owners of a relatively small number of galleries in London, Paris, Brussels and several Swiss cities do the majority of distribution to collectors, museums and other galleries further from the source. A particular difficulty for those who seek to put an end to the trade is that some countries, including the UK, have consistently refused to sign the 1970 UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property. This means that an object looted or stolen from its African country of origin can be legally imported into the UK.

What alarms contributors is that a trade which one associates with nineteenth-century tomb robbers and the depredations of colonial "collectors" shows no signs of abating, but in fact is on the increase. Michael Brent, a journalist working for a Belgian weekly who conducted a six-month investigation into the trade notes the irony:

that it is precisely at the moment when the African peoples have begun to acquire their independence - during the 1960s and 1970s - and thus to hold their heads high, to hope in the future, that this clandestine traffic of antique objects developed and took on such huge proportions. (76)¹⁷

A further alarming feature is the active involvement of many Africans in the stripping of their patrimony. Schmidt and McIntosh write that one of the key "obstacles to developing local sense of pride and immediate identification with the objects of the past is the absence of a historical imagination that ties the living and sometimes diverse populations to those who came before them" (10)¹⁸. This is matched by a reciprocal problem of representation in the West:

African cultures have never been viewed as animating and informing such objects but simply as the place from which such objects are harvested. (8)

¹⁷. Michel Brent, "A View Inside the Illicit Trade in African Antiquities", in Schmidt and McIntosh (1996).

¹⁸. See their introductory chapter headed "The African Past Endangered".

They see these as instances of a larger issue (and here the relevance for the archaeological scene in post-apartheid South Africa is direct): Who defines cultural heritage?

What are the power relations that come into play in defining what is culturally important and what is not? What would induce those who feel they are powerless to make the effort to preserve artifacts or sites?

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Archaeology and Neo-Colonialism.

In the following two sections I want to round-off this exploration of the notion of a post-colonial archaeology by discussing it in relation to another form of archaeology, which I shall call a neo-colonial archaeology.

The notion of neo-colonialism was first used by African intellectuals in the years following independence to describe a state of continued dependence on, and subservience to the metropole, even after formal decolonisation. Kwane Nkrumah - West African intellectual, proponent of African Socialism, and one-time president of independent Ghana - begins his seminal work, *Neo-colonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism* (1974 [1965]), by noting that:

old-fashioned colonialism is by no means entirely abolished. It still constitutes an African problem, but it is everywhere on the retreat... In place of colonialism as the main instrument of imperialism we have today neo-colonialism. (ix)

He continues:

The essence of neo-colonialism is that the State which is subject to it is, in theory, independent and has all the outward trappings of international sovereignty. In reality its economic system and thus its political policy is directed from the outside. (ix)

This may take the form of control by an outside state (for example, a former colonial state), or by "a consortium of financial interests which are not specifically identifiable with any particular State" (x). He cites the example of the former Congo in this regard. Nkrumah makes two points about neo-colonialism which I want to underline. The first is that he is objecting not to the fact of outside

involvement in the economies of the newly independent states, but to the manner of this involvement. He writes:

The result of neo-colonialism is that foreign capital is used for the exploitation rather than for the development of the less developed parts of the world. Investment under neo-colonialism increases rather than decreases the gap between the rich and the poor countries of the world. (x)

Thus it follows that:

The struggle against neo-colonialism is not aimed at excluding the capital of the developed countries. It is aimed at preventing the financial power of the developed countries from being used in such a way as to impoverish the less developed. (x)

Nkrumah puts this succinctly: "The question is one of power. A state in the grip of neo-colonialism is not master of its own destiny" (x).

The second point is that neo-colonialism is not simply imposed by the metropolitan power, but requires the collaboration of the neo-colonial state:

In the first place, the rulers of neo-colonial States derive their authority to govern, not from the will of the people, but from the support which they obtain from their neo-colonial masters. They have therefore little interest in... taking steps which would challenge the colonial pattern of commerce and industry, which it is the object of neo-colonialism to preserve. (xv)

Nkrumah goes on to examine the working-out of neo-colonialism in a number of specific instances, including "The Anglo American Corporation Limited", "Monopoly Capitalism and the American Dollar", "The Tin, Aluminium and Nickel Giants", and so on. Since the 1960s the term has gained currency, and is still widely used in connection with the deepening economic crisis in many African states.

In my own use of the notion of neo-colonialism to describe a form of archaeological practice I take it out of this specific context, and give it a slightly broader meaning. That is, I take it to imply a continuation of the forms and relations of colonialist society (and within that, of colonialist archaeology) under a slightly altered guise - most especially continued economic and social, but also cultural and intellectual dependence on the metropole.

Neo-Colonialism and the Underdevelopment of Indigenous Archaeologies.

As I read it, the working-out of a neo-colonial relation with regard to South African archaeology (and other Third World archaeologies) has two aspects: a local aspect, and a global aspect. Locally, archaeologists might opt, on the one hand, for a model of archaeology as the dispassionate pursuit of knowledge. In this model archaeology is answerable in the first place to the internal logic of the scientific process, and in the second place to the imperatives of the disciplinary metropole, and that is all. It casts archaeology as being fundamentally disengaged from the specificities of a local social context. In the South African case this constitutes a continuation of an essentially colonialist model of archaeological practice, and as such is the model of least resistance in that very little changes. It is the choice of the old-guard, those who delved away obliviously under apartheid, or argued vociferously for a notion of academic "freedom" which interprets this as the freedom to disengage, rather than the freedom to engage.

On the other hand, archaeologists may buy into the market-related discourses of Contract Archaeology and tourism and archaeology, with their associated notions of archaeological utility, client service, and the past-as-product. These are the modernisers, and in a sense they are more canny (although by no means closer to confronting the real issues facing archaeology after apartheid). In both cases the discourse is either silent on the key issue of social value, or answers it in ways which are severely constraining from a Third World point of view, but also more generally. In both cases, I want to suggest, the result is the same: the continued alienation of archaeology in South Africa from its potential social base, and its inaccessibility to all but a small elite defined either through their relation to the academy, or (in the case of tourism and archaeology) through their class position.

Globally a neo-colonial scenario in archaeology sees a further opening-up of South African territory as a field of opportunity for First World archaeologists. Free of the embarrassing restraint of apartheid, with an economy softened-up by bruising encounters with global financial markets, South Africa becomes an increasingly attractive research proposition. Established First World researchers and research institutes visit in increasing numbers, especially from the United States, which has a long history of finding archaeological resources in its own hinterland, the countries of the South American continent. Rather like trans-national corporations they move confidently into the new territory, they mine its resources, and repatriate profit in the form of research findings, publications, and

enhancement to their own careers. In this process the dynamic between "core" and "periphery" is confirmed. I quote from Alex Vines's useful review of Robertshaw's *A History of African Archaeology* ("Digging Deep", published in the *Southern African Review of Books*, 1991). According to Vines:

Africa has sat, and continues to sit, on the periphery of archaeological research. Archaeologists travel from core areas such as the United States, Sweden, France and the United Kingdom to work in Africa, with the objective of testing in Africa working theories formulated in Western academic circles in the corridors of, say the University of Cambridge or the University of Florida. (14)

In colonial representations Africa figured as dark, mysterious and fecund (the origin of life itself!). Now a new mythology circulates side-by-side with the old: Africa is the land of opportunities and untapped resources, the land of the quick buck or the quick discovery¹⁹.

Local archaeologists seize on the opportunities inherent in such allegiances. They enter into the spirit of things by taking on the role of a domestic *comprador* class. They smooth the way for visiting researchers and provide local know-how. More importantly, they provide access to sites and permits for excavation. In return for these services they are rewarded with conference invitations, access to prestige publications, and the kudos of international recognition. Vines reports that as different bodies have competed for influence in Africa, the "stakes have become higher":

Scholarships, air tickets for conferences and liaison visits and lap-top computers have been used as gifts to assist this process. This is not to say that the African archaeologists receiving these attentions are naive about what is going on. As one African archaeologist recently pointed out "these are the new beads and tobacco for European access, we milk them for what they offer" (15)

Vines continues: "The danger is that quality of research design is likely to lose out in this sort of market" (15).

¹⁹. In this regard Judy Sealy reports a marked increase in the number of archaeologists visiting the Department of Archaeology at the University of Cape Town from Europe and North America, over the past year or two (pers. comm. November 1997). She confirms this sense that South Africa is increasingly being viewed as a potential field of research opportunities by First World researchers.

The major consequence of this shift in orientation and allegiances is the underdevelopment of indigenous archaeologies. Local research initiatives are unable to attract funding except at the points where they coincide with international interests. The preference of the latter is for sensational research, prestige projects and quick results, rather than cumulative research over a sustained period. Writing from a First World perspective, Diane Gifford-Gonzalez (University of California, Santa Cruz) notes that:

it may well be time to examine how foreign institutional systems influence [the] definition of fundable research problems in Africa and to assess how such terms of engagement will work in the future. For example, one could argue that the institutional pressures imposed on North American academics to pursue individualistic, quick-rewards research projects in Africa have set the tone for [the] underdevelopment of national archaeological databases, [and] long-term collaborative projects. (1996: 10)²⁰

Third World archaeologists who try to remain outside this network are denied positions and resources. Local initiatives which are deemed irrelevant to the international effort are allowed to wither. Local archaeology, whose purpose is to service metropolitan interests, becomes a poor facsimile of the archaeology practiced in the First World. Formally, the situation resembles that of colonialist archaeologies which were always conceived as outliers of the disciplinary metropolises - but with less autonomy now that funding from the national state is less forthcoming and Third World archaeologists find themselves more than ever tied into intra-disciplinary funding networks.

A further consequence is the underdevelopment of a local historical consciousness. As Third World practitioners accept the research agendas imposed by their First World collaborators, the majority of people find little to engage their attention in a discipline which seems more removed than ever from indigenous concerns. Alienated from an archaeological past first by colonialism, later by apartheid, they now find themselves distanced from a past retailed for affluent local and international consumers and international funding agencies.

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Coping With Collapse.

²⁰. This is in an exchange published in the *African Archaeological Review* 13(1), 1996, called "The Future of African Archaeology".

The scenario sketched above is a fairly orthodox one given in accordance with the tenets of underdevelopment or dependency theory. It emphasises the uneven nature of such exchanges and the consequent deepening of a structural relationship of dependency. At this point I want to introduce an added level of complexity into this account simply by making the observation that if it was not for overseas-sponsored research expeditions, archaeology by and large would cease to function in many African countries. In this connection I want to refer to two papers which make the point about the dependent nature of indigenous archaeologies, but also begin to explore the double-edged nature of First World/ Third World collaborations. In both cases the trajectory of underdevelopment is the same, and begins with the withdrawal of national funding following a crisis in the national economy.

The first paper is by Merrick Posnansky who documents the "collapse" of West African archaeology following the economic downturn during the late-1970s and early-1980s. Called "Coping With Collapse in the 1990s: West African Museums, Universities and National Patrimonies" (1996), it reads like an archaeological version of the passage from Leys with which I opened my account (in Chapter 1)²¹. Posnansky notes that the era of the 1960s dawned as an era of hope: "Africa entered a new era in the 1960s: Independence was proclaimed and with it came a sense of hope and pride" (143). He writes: "Universities, museums, ministries of culture, and antiquities services figured strongly in the development plans of the newly emerging states". In countries like Nigeria "every state scrambled to have both a university and a museum" (143). In the early 1970s several departments of archaeology in Nigeria were conducting research and training, and there was a flourishing department in Ghana, with smaller research units in Abidjan and Dakar.

The collapse which followed as national funds were withdrawn was traumatic:

Archaeologists in Ghana and Nigeria lost their capacity to travel into the field. Projects could rarely be sustained. Key faculty, both African and expatriate, sought jobs outside the country, and graduates sent for overseas training never returned... Opportunities for long-term student participation in field research dissipated. Few books came into the libraries and virtually none arrived in the university bookstores. (148)

²¹. Posnansky's paper is in the Schmidt and McIntosh collection, *Plundering Africa's Past* (1996).

In real terms salaries declined to one-fiftieth of their 1960s levels in countries like Ghana. In Benin salaries were up to six months in arrears.

Foreign-led research expeditions continued, but brought their own problems:

All too frequently many of the foreign researchers have been graduate students working with limited funds themselves, using but not always replacing scarce fieldwork equipment and exporting their funds abroad for study. (149)

The result is that although "We certainly now know much more about West Africa's past than we did a quarter of a century ago, we have paid a price in sites not conserved and an awareness by the wrong groups, for the wrong reasons, of the intrinsic value of the cultural patrimony" (150)²².

In a paper commissioned by the African Archaeological Review ("African archaeology: looking forward", 1990) Francis Musonda gives a perspective from Southern Africa²³. He writes:

Political turbulence, coupled with the depressed world economy, has played a major part in the decline of archaeological activity. The "brain drain" syndrome continues unabated... University departments continue to be starved of lecturers and teaching materials, while museums continue to suffer from lack of adequate conservation and storage facilities, and publication of research findings is often granted even less priority. (12)²⁴

²². Also see the comments of Robert McIntosh in "The Future of African Archaeology" (1996) exchange. He writes: "It is a sad fact of global economics that, for the foreseeable future, big projects will continue to be funded from outside the continent.... However, some African colleagues worry increasingly about a new drive to exclusivity, creeping into some metropolitan national styles, that threatens to overwhelm African research priorities" (12).

²³. This was written as a companion piece to Thurston Shaw's retrospective: "African archaeology: looking back and looking forward" (*AAR* 7: 3-31, 1989). Shaw insisted that the follow-up article should come from a young black archaeologist.

²⁴. For further accounts of the underdevelopment of indigenous archaeologies see Mohamed Sahnouni's contribution to "The Future of African Archaeology" exchange (*AAR* 13(1), 1996), and that of A.K. Segobye. In a paper on "The Future of Archaeology in Kenya" (*AAR* 13(2), 1996) Karega-Munene writes: "Virtually every archaeologist working in this country holds a full-time job plus one or more part-time jobs" (88). Chapurukha M. Kusimba writes ("Archaeology in African Museums", *AAR* 13, 1996): "Many museum professionals have gone to the university to teach, changed professions, or sought employment in the West. On a recent visit to one museum, I found that many junior museum staff were

He reports a declining interest in American universities in training Africa students:

As more and more international research expeditions were made to Africa, a number of American and European universities began to take an interest in the training of Africans... But today, the interest in teaching of archaeology and training of Africans in American universities seems to be declining. (11)

Musonda quotes a revealing statistic in connection with the lack of direct funding for established researchers in Africa. He writes:

Obtaining funding for archaeological projects is one of the most frustrating exercises that a young archaeologist has to undertake... More than ninety percent of research funds that have been given to African archaeologists have been disbursed during the course of training. (12)

The editors of the *AAR* pick-up on this statistic (in an editorial headed "Involvement and relevance"). They write:

Dr Musonda... suggests that many of his contemporaries are effectively ignored by overseas sponsors once their post-graduate training is complete... In effect, this is a form of neo-colonial exploitation. (1)

In an ironic aside Musonda writes of the biennial conference of the Society of Africanist Archaeologists (SAFA, formerly known as the Society of Africanist Archaeologists in America, SAAAM), at the University of Florida, on the subject of "the future of archaeology in Africa". The "burning issues" under discussion were the "underdevelopment of archaeology and the funding and training of archaeologists in Africa" (12). However, the high costs of travel meant that: "Despite the great need for African archaeologists to have been present at such a conference, only a few Africans undergoing training in the USA were able to attend" (12). In fact, an unresolved tension in Musonda's paper nicely captures the ambiguity of his own position with regard to the metropole when, on the one hand, he calls for increased First World/ Third World collaboration, and on the other, he asserts the priority of indigenous research interests and the right of African archaeologists to develop autonomously²⁵. Of course, this is nothing less

dealing with the rising inflation by skipping lunch and walking to and from their residences" (166).

²⁵. For a paper of equal ambivalence see that published in the *West African Journal of Archaeology* (24, 1994) under the title of "African Archaeology in the 21st Century; Or, Africa, Cultural Puppet on a String?". It was submitted by Bassey Andah, A. Adande, C.A. Folorunso and O. Bagoda in response to the

than an unresolved tension in underdevelopment theory in general (and more broadly in the politics of neo-colonialism): When to engage with the interests of the metropole? And under what conditions?

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Post-Colonial Versus Neo-Colonial Archaeologies.

Clearly not all First World/ Third World contacts are necessarily neo-colonial in character. In fact, one of the surest ways of destroying the outlook for Third World archaeologies would be to turn one's back on all such exchanges. Also, clearly, Contract Archaeology and the practices of tourism and archaeology will play an important role in the future of archaeology in South Africa. And what of the air tickets and conference invitations - are these not part of the *quid pro quo* of academic intercourse? More deeply one might question: Is there always and necessarily a contradiction between First World and Third World research interests? Is there always and necessarily a contradiction between the interests of the market-place and the interests of society (as I have phrased them)?

Rather than drawing a line between foreign and local initiatives, or between market-related and community based initiatives which an uncomplicated reading of the situation might suggest, I shall take the position that we need to examine each case for intention and motivation, and for the manner in which it deals with (or fails to deal with) a range of issues and concerns which are of pressing importance for Third World archaeologists, but also archaeologists elsewhere. As I read them, these issues and concerns are the following: accessibility, ownership, control, audience, accountability and orientation.

1994 SAFA meeting at the University of Indiana, at which a round-table discussion was held on "African Archaeology in the 21st Century". Their complaint is that a body which they describe as a "well meaning Africanist association based in the United States, and whose members are mostly Europeans and Americans" (153) should be setting out to chart the future of African archaeology. They write of a "second colonization" in this regard. Although quite correct in their assessment, the matter of research funding remains unresolved. They write: "Yes there is the problem of adequate funding but much more important is the establishment of the right (truly African) cultural perspective as the basis for training all students - Africans and non-Africans, who genuinely want to understand Africa as against wanting to impose their own cultural purview on African peoples and materials" (157).

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Accessibility, Ownership and Control.

The defining feature of archaeology under apartheid was the manner in which it was progressively isolated from society, to become a discipline without a social base and without a rooting in a popular consciousness of the past. Given this history, issues of accessibility, ownership and control become central to the ways in which we rethink and refashion archaeology after apartheid. Broadly speaking, the challenge is to turn what is essentially a vertical and hierarchical structure, into a horizontal and democratic one. That is: to democratise access, to diffuse control, and to provide a popular basis for ownership.

Under the Draft National Heritage Bill currently before parliament all archaeological artefacts become the property of the state, and may not be collected, bought or sold without a permit. It also provides for the restitution of cultural property by communities with a bona fide interest in an object held in a publicly funded institution (J. Deacon 1997). The issue of access to sites is a separate and in some ways more difficult issue in that the vast majority of sites occur on white-owned land. The central and inescapable fact in this regard (and in regard to so much else in the politics of transformation in post-apartheid South Africa) is that more than four-fifths of agricultural land is owned by 55 000 white commercial farmers, with 1,2 million mainly black micro-farmers crowded onto the rest²⁶.

In fact, discussions about issues of access and ownership as far as they apply to land provide a useful analogue to thinking about archaeological remains. Historically, the process of archaeological exploration of the Third World was closely associated with the colonial conquest of new territories. The dynamics in each case were remarkably similar: exploration, discovery, the writing of the territories of the periphery into a specifically European (or Western) conception of the world. It is in this context that an initiative like the Clanwilliam Living Landscape Project takes on its originality and interest. The proposal document makes it clear that this is a project phrased around issues of access, ownership and control. It is about "reclaiming" a "lost" heritage, and about "taking responsibility" for archaeological sites. More fundamentally, it is about

²⁶. Martin Woollacott in the *Mail and Guardian* July 12 to 18, 1996. "Time for hard bargaining and tough choices".

"empowering" a "marginalized" community. Ultimately, however, there can be no enlightenment without access, just as there can be no empowerment without control.

A further aspect of the debate around access concerns access to the results of archaeological production, and the research reports, artefacts and historical narratives which result from this process. In this regard organisations like the Archaeology Workshop (or the Archaeological Resource Centre in Canada) provide useful models for reconceptualising the process of archaeological research. Our aim in the Archaeology Workshop was never simply to popularise the results of archaeological research, but to change the way that archaeologists work. That is, to make the rendering of research into a popularly accessible form seem like a further indispensable stage of the research process (as indeed it seemed to us).

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Audience.

There are two distinct versions or conceptions of the notion of audience in archaeological theory and practice. The first (the "neo-colonial" approach) construes the notion of audience narrowly as the international community of archaeologists. Its works are essentially addresses to a closed circle of scholars and practitioners - archaeological "insiders" with a handle on the discourse. This has been the approach in South African archaeology, at least since the late 1960s, under the influence of Americanist theory and the drive towards modernization. A second approach (a post-colonial approach) construes the notion of audience broadly to include not only the circle of practitioners, but a circle of lay archaeologists and interested persons, and beyond that society as a whole, and the role that archaeology might reasonably be expected to play in the life of such a group.

In fact, this is not so much a novel conception of audience, as a return to an anterior conception of audience in South African archaeology. Although it has been generally overlooked by the generations of practitioners since 1970, archaeology developed in this country as a "popular" concern. An organ like the *SAAB* was set up specifically as a popular medium, and for almost half of its existence the majority of articles were by non-professionals. By the same token, the Archaeological Survey was defined as having a threefold objective: "It was to

be a research institute, an information centre for all who were engaged in archaeological studies, and it was to promote and encourage general public interest in South African prehistory"²⁷. One remembers that Van Riet Lowe was an adept exploiter of the popular media to spread archaeological information, and Malan's complaint that extension work left him little time for research. Of course, these earlier practitioners were working with a conception of audience which was restricted in its own way (a colonialist conception of audience). When they wrote of the "lay enthusiast" or the "general public" they were writing about white South Africans, although they never said so in as many words. Goodwin, in particular, employs a code in which the key terms are "educated" and "intelligent". Thus he will write of his desire to make the results of archaeological research available to any "educated" person. The intention behind the Handbook Series was that it should "build up into an encyclopaedia of Archaeology in South Africa... [which could be] referred to quickly and easily by any enthusiast with access to a good public library system"²⁸.

As much as anything else the role of colonialist archaeology was to draw together an expatriate community, among whose functions was that of colonial administration and control. The mutual pursuit of archaeological knowledge, whatever else it did, also served to convince them of the penetrating powers of Enlightenment science, of the rightness of their cause, and their fitness to rule. The challenge for a post-colonial archaeology is to transfer this populist impulse to a radically different setting, and to broaden its address to include all South Africans and most especially those excluded under the old, colonialist paradigm in archaeology.

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Accountability.

A useful way of thinking about all of these issues is in terms of accountability. In this regard I want to refer to an editorial by Aaron Mazel (SAAB 46, 1991, "Time to expose the unexposed data in our cabinets, files, boxes, etc."). Mazel notes that Article 4, Point 3 of the Human Sciences Research Council's (HSRC's) "Research Code" states that: "The HSRC recognizes society's right of access to research findings" (59). He writes that:

²⁷. This is in B.D. Malan's 1970 paper "Remarks and reminiscences on the history of archaeology in South Africa" (SAAB 25).

²⁸. See Goodwin's editorial in the SAAB 1:1, 1945.

before even considering other ethical and professional reasons for publishing research findings, we need to acknowledge that the public institution that funds much, if not most, archaeological research in South Africa considers society's access to research findings a right and not a privilege. (59)

The underlying issue, he suggests, is one of accountability:

we need to examine continually our ethical and professional responsibilities... [and to ask] why we do research and to whom we, as receivers of public funds and producers of knowledge, are accountable. (59)

In Mazel's view:

ultimately we are accountable not only to our respective institutions, the archaeological community, or even the public institutions that fund us, but to South African society as a whole. (59)

In this context, I want to suggest that part of the crisis in South African archaeology is a crisis of accountability. In the course of maintaining a stance of non-accountability under apartheid (We just happen to do research here. Do not hold us responsible for the crimes of apartheid.), South African archaeology has found that it speaks to nobody, and for nobody, and conversely, nobody speaks for it.

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Orientation.

Perhaps most important in distinguishing a post-colonial from a neo-colonial archaeology is the issue of "orientation" - that is, the sense of its own relation to other parts of the discipline. Where does it look for inspiration and direction? What are the sources of theory? Where does it direct its outputs? What are its primary allegiances, its strongest ties? If colonialist (and by extension, neo-colonial) archaeologies function as regional outliers of the metropole, reproducing at second-hand and on a smaller scale the priorities, interests and forms of practice of the metropole; then a post-colonial archaeology announces itself in the first place as a departure, as a break with tradition. A post-colonial archaeology is about asserting the rights and priorities of indigenous realities (however these

might appear). It is about setting out research agendas which answer the needs of local contexts and challenges. Most fundamentally, it is about ending the old state of thrall to the disciplinary metropolises, that terrible, disempowering sense that what one was doing was a pale shadow of what was happening in Cambridge or Berkeley.

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It now becomes possible to graph against one another these two modes of archaeology, the neo-colonial and the post-colonial. I would characterise them in the following way:

Neo-Colonial Archaeology:

- * "narrow" conception of accountability
- * utilitarian conception of value, emphasis on "academic" value or use value
- * politics implicit
- * prestige publication, international audience
- * relations of ownership and control implicit or hidden, tendency to centralise control
- * leadership-oriented
- * vertically structured, "big men" take charge
- * prestige projects, sensational research
- * focus on research and entertainment
- * non-reflexive, focus on methodology and technique
- * subservience to the metropole and the traditions of Western scholarship

Post-Colonial Archaeology:

- * broadly accountable, seeks multiple constituencies
- * emphasis on social value
- * politics explicit
- * local dissemination, popular audience
- * relations of ownership and control foregrounded and explicit, disperses control and responsibility
- * consultative, democratic, participatory
- * horizontally structured, attention to the voices of the marginalized and disempowered
- * topics of popular interest and local relevance take precedence
- * focus on education
- * reflexive, focus on theory
- * independence from the metropole, critical engagement rather than unthinking acceptance

Some points require further comment. I shall make these under four headings: theory, history, materiality and politics.

Theory.

Theory is marginalized in archaeology in general, but the particular marginalization of theory in African archaeology is an aspect of its underdevelopment. In this regard I want to return to a passage from Francis Musonda ("African archaeology: looking forward", 1990). He refers to the English language problem experienced by African archaeologists, "especially the language relating to technical and theoretical matters". He continues:

Who expects me, for instance, to spend hours on end trying to digest the thoughts and ideas advanced in such publications as *Analytical Archaeology*... which offer no immediate solution to my country's problems? Do I need to engage in unraveling archaeological problems through application of theories that are of little or no immediate relevance to solving our pressing cultural, social and scientific difficulties? The expectation of an African government is that a citizen who has acquired training in a discipline such as archaeology should be sufficiently well equipped to offer practical solutions to pressing economic, cultural, social and political problems. One therefore has to rethink the implications of spending one's lifetime on the "New Archaeology" in a country lacking the necessary infrastructure. (18)

I sympathise with Musonda, but I also disagree with him. Not as an advocate of the New Archaeology (in 1990!), but because of the more general anti-theoreticism of his passage. In fact, Musonda is repeating an old and established position which sees "theory" as opposed to "practice" - as an unnecessary frivolity with which one dispenses when conditions become difficult. Moreover, he does so by pleading the special interests of Third World archaeologists. There are three points which make this a dangerous position, besides all the standard justifications about the need for theory. The first is what I can only call the amnesia of neo-colonial archaeologies. That is, the desire to put behind them the recent past, or to propagate facile or uncomplicated understandings of that past. Already in some quarters in South African society apartheid can seem like a distant bad dream, and the hard lessons of the past disregarded in the name of a drive for development.

The second and more important point is that one of the weapons of a neo-colonial archaeology (and neo-colonialism more generally) is a discourse which can sound remarkably liberal and democratic. This is the language of corporate responsibility

and economic modernization. It is the language of Bushmans Kloof, for example - in this case the key terms are "heritage", "development" and "conservation". It is no small thing to say that one of the best weapons of a post-colonial archaeology against this discourse is the weapon of theory.

The third point is that to a quite remarkable degree archaeology remains a non-reflexive discipline. This is in spite of the best efforts of post-processual archaeology, which in any case has always been confined to a small enclave of mainly First World archaeologists. One of the central challenges for a post-colonial archaeology is to encourage the habits of introspection. That is, to constantly pose the questions: Why? For whom? To what ends? (in addition to the How? of traditional archaeology); and to arrive at informed positions on these questions. And the only way to do this is through the resources of theory.

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History.

A further point to emerge from this review is the manner in which the notion of "history" as a set of ideas about a collective past, and the forums in which these ideas emerge, are changing and being contested. It is no longer a case of a "State" versus a "People's" history as the People's Archaeology would have it, but a far more complex and variegated terrain of informal and folk histories, official versus non-official histories, academic versus popular histories, media histories and even fantasy pasts. Equally, popular and empowering ideas about the past, of the kind which Fanon and Biko amongst others describe, are as likely to emerge in a TV mini-series, in the first-person oral testimonies of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, or in a forum like the Khoisan Conference, as they are in school text-books and the more traditional forms of academic production - indeed, they are rather more likely to do so.

The task of a post-colonial archaeology is not to entrench itself around one idea of history (academic, scientific); nor - and this is more likely - is it to develop a dualism between a serious academic and scientific aspect of its work, and a non-serious popular spin-off. Rather, the challenge is to make the disciplinary discourse reflect these developments, by importing strands of these popular directions into academic writing. Implicit in such developments is the suggestion that traditional forms of archaeological writing themselves are outmoded. We need to explore such directions more fully, to seek points of conjunction, and to

use this as an opportunity to question and critique traditional ways of "telling" about the past.

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Materiality.

A further set of comments concerns the notion of materiality. More than anything else it is the material nature of archaeological remains, and the nature of archaeology as a material practice, which allows us to explore those themes which I have put forward here in connection with the notion of a post-colonial archaeology - the themes of memory, identity and nationhood. At the same time it is the evocative power of material artefacts which allows archaeology to make its particular intervention in the field of education. Perhaps most significantly, it is archaeology's particular relation to the material products of social behaviour and cultural expression which provides its unique point of entry into the traditions of Western Philosophy and social theory. If we follow the implications of this observation through to their conclusion, archaeology has the potential to become not simply another form of critical practice, but the "other" of Western academic practice itself: the representative in an academic universe which turns around the notion of the text, of the body and the "thing" and all that inhere in them. For those interested in theory in archaeology I interpret this in the form of a challenge: it is in getting to grips with the social implications of materiality - a conspicuously neglected task in the traditions of Western scholarship - that archaeology will stake a claim for itself as a discipline of innovative theory and original insights.

Finally, from a post-colonial perspective I find it particularly satisfying that archaeology should set itself up to explore that part of experience which an emphasis on textuality sets aside. After all, the "book" has been a notoriously double-edged symbol. Symbol, on the one hand, of Western intellectual life; but also, as Homi Bhabha reminds us, master-symbol of colonial subjection and control²⁹.

²⁹. See Homi K. Bhabha "Signs Taken for Wonders: Questions of Ambivalence and Authority Under a Tree Outside Delhi, May 1817" (1993). He writes: "There is a scene in the cultural writings of English colonialism which repeats so insistently after the early nineteenth century - and, through that repetition, so triumphantly inaugurates a literature of empire - that I am bound to repeat it once more. It is the scenario, played out in the wild and wordless wastes of colonial India, Africa, the Caribbean, of the sudden fortuitous discovery of the English book" (29).

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The Politics of Hope II.

By way of conclusion I want to pose a question which needs to be put to any self-consciously progressive work of advocacy such as my own. It goes like this: given the prevailing conditions in the Third World, but most especially in Africa, of the kinds of contexts outlined by Leys - underdevelopment, indebtedness, continued dependence on the metropole - that is, a prevailing neo-colonial context, how can a post-colonial archaeology be expected to take root, much less thrive? In South Africa, no less than in the other former colonies, the old forms of historical inequality are being entrenched, and little has been done to address fundamental questions of economic restitution and redistribution. How, in fairness, can I argue for a form of academic practice (consultative, democratic, broadly accountable) which on some points is so patently at odds with the society which supports it?

By way of answer I want to return to Edward Said's characterization of the role of the intellectual. Said makes two points which have a direct bearing on the question posed above. The first, as we have seen, concerns the proper role of the intellectual in society, which he describes as being to seek a tough-minded, independent and critical engagement with the forces and ideas which shape that society - "Speaking Truth to Power" in Said's formulation (*Representations of the Intellectual*, 1994). His second point concerns the place of the academy in society, which he describes variously as "special" and "privileged". In this regard I want to refer to the text of the T.B. Davie Memorial Lecture delivered by Said at the University of Cape Town on 22 May 1991. The T.B. Davie Memorial Lecture yearly commemorates the notion of academic freedom at this institution, in the context of attempts by the apartheid state to regulate and control the universities. The title of Said's lecture is "Identity, Authority and Freedom: the Potentate and the Traveler".

It begins as a meditation on the notion of academic "freedom", which Said notes has a double meaning. On the one side of the debate there are those who see the academy as being "above" parochial interests, and essentially disengaged from

Bhabha writes of "the emblem of the English book... as an insignia of colonial authority and a signifier of colonial desire and discipline" (29).

society. To be free means to be unaccountable. On the other side are those who argue that:

the university is meant to be engaged intellectually and politically with significant political and social change, with improvements in the status of subaltern or minority populations, with abuses of power and lapses in morality, which the university must needs remedy, criticize, align itself in opposition to. (2)

This is a position which Said forcefully supports. But, he continues, which ever side one supports (and he writes "a thousand qualifications and conditions can enter into a discussion of either or both sides"):

there is one assumption which is common to both: the idea that the status of the university or school as well as what goes along with them intellectually as well as socially is special, is different from other sites in society like the government bureaucracy, the workplace, or the home. (2-3)

He writes:

The fact is, I believe, that all societies today assign a special privilege to the academy that whether it exempts it from intercourse with the everyday world or whether it involves it directly in that world, says that unique conditions do- indeed ought, to prevail in it. (3)

He follows this up with a discussion of the place of the academy in the U.S. and in what he calls "the Arab world", both of which short-change the notion of academic freedom in important ways. In the independent Arab states, for example, he writes of the universities held hostage by a spurious notion of nationalism:

nationalism in the university has come to represent not freedom but accommodation, not brilliance and daring but caution and fear, not the advancement of knowledge but self-preservation. (7)

The result is that "timidity, a studious lack of imagination, careful conservatism come to rule intellectual practice" (7). Finally, Said suggests, it comes "to two images of inhabiting the academic and cultural space provided by school and university": the "potentate", and the "traveler". The former is there in order "to reign and hold sway". They survey all before them with detachment and mastery, not risking, not critical, above all not questioning the authority by which they occupy their position. The model of the academic as traveler "is considerably more mobile, more playful, although no less serious... [it] depends not on power,

but on motion, on a willingness to go into different worlds, use different idioms, understand a variety of disguises, masks, rhetorics" (18).

The points that I want to extract from Said's work are as follows: In the first place he underlines the importance of the academy as a locus of intellectual activity, and in terms of my own discussion, as a place where archaeology takes place. This is apart from the other potential locations in which archaeology takes place, in the Contract sector, in tourism and archaeology, and in a regulatory body like the National Monuments Council.

More importantly, Said turns the notion of a post-colonial archaeology into a real and achievable potential within the discipline, rather than simply an enticing possibility or an idealistic thesis, by insisting on the relative autonomy of the academic process from prevailing economic and social trends. According to Said academic practice is not condemned through a kind of structural inevitability to be a pale reflection of the society in which it operates, faithfully reproducing in its own modes of practice trends and assumptions in the wider world. Rather, it can strike out in daring and original ways, it can set new agendas and imperatives, and it can place itself interestingly at odds with a prevailing trends. Indeed, it is in so doing that the academy has its highest purpose, in that it allows this kind of partial, qualified autonomy.

Said immediately qualifies this point by noting that in some institutional systems this "academic and cultural space" has been severely curtailed. His example is the university system in the independent Arab states. My own would be the effects of underdevelopment on the university system in the rest of Africa. However, the point is that South African universities are not now in such a state, and if they were constrained in the past then it was in forms which even then allowed substantial latitude of operation³⁰. The question is - and here we approach the heart of the matter - whether academics choose to take advantage of this autonomy. In order to unshackle our practice from these larger social forces and trends we have, first and fundamentally, to choose to do so. The price

³⁰. The most obvious form of regulation was the Extension of University Education Act which came into force on 1 January 1960, and which attempted to enforce the racial segregation of South African universities. It was in response to this act that the T.B. Davie Memorial Lecture was instituted at the University of Cape Town. The Extension of University Education Act was repealed by the Tertiary Education Act number 66 of 1988. Said's address came at an important symbolic moment. An information board on "Academic Freedom at UCT" (in the Jagger Library) notes that the year 1991 marked the end of attempts "to entrench segregation in education through legislation".

of not choosing is to be carried along willy nilly by these same forces and trends, and to be drawn into the prevailing logic which structures their practice.

This makes the first act of a post-colonial archaeology, I want to suggest, a profoundly personal one. It is a critical decision made by each archaeologist to opt for an accountable, socially engaged and contextually appropriate mode of practice, of the kind which I describe here. Not to do so means allowing oneself to be drawn into a prevailing neo-colonial form of practice and, as I would understand it, to perpetuate a second failure of theory and academic purpose. It means allowing notions of a popular consciousness of the past, of the social value of archaeology and the critical function of its practitioners to fall prey to a new and freshly alienating set of ideas. It also accepts for archaeology an increasingly peripheral role in post-colonial society: as eccentric academic pursuit, form of heritage management and tourist sensation.

Making this kind of decision demands of archaeologists in this country a change in accustomed roles, and in the terms of their engagement with society, from the "passive" to the "active". It is fair to say that South African archaeologists have seldom knowingly exercised this option of critical choice. To a greater or lesser degree, archaeology in South Africa has always been formed from without, whether by the influence of the metropolises or by the climate of apartheid. What is remarkable in reviewing the history of archaeology in this country is the extent to which it sought to efface itself against the backdrop either of colonialism or of apartheid. Archaeologists in South Africa have consistently sought the kinds of accommodations which would leave them alone with their work, without having to confront the nature of the society in which they practiced. In the process archaeology became cordoned off from that same society, and was allowed to realise only a small part of its social value. Above all, the danger of a neo-colonial archaeology is that it will reinforce and extend this process.

There is a significant element in Said's conception of the intellectual which places the individual alone with her or his conscience, and the knowledge of what is contextually appropriate and correct. So that finally I want to suggest that a post-colonial archaeology is less about stridently advancing a new theory or a new approach, so much as it is about posing a set of questions. These are the questions which have guided and informed my own approach in this work: What does it mean to be an archaeologist in a Third World context? For whom do we write? To whom are we accountable? What should be our relation to the traditional centres of the discipline? What is the nature of our relationship to our own history? Most importantly: How does archaeology take its place in a post-

colonial society? What does archaeology have to say to those of us who are reaching beyond the stock and standard answers to create for ourselves and for the discipline of which we are a part a future which is more lively, more democratic, and more tied to the realities of place in a newly independent society?

From a more practical point of view, too, the notion of a post-colonial archaeology must remain open-ended (indeed, it can only be resolved in practice). Is it possible to resolve the tension between the needs and priorities of First World funders, and a set of local interests and concerns? Are archaeological practitioners, ingrained in the habits of non-accountability, capable of making the change to a post-colonial archaeology? More deeply: Is it possible to reform a system from within, or will archaeologists only respond, as they have done in the past, to outside pressures and incentives? In terms of the two modes of archaeology which I outline, we might ask: Can a post-colonial archaeology exist side-by-side with a neo-colonial archaeology? Can aspects of the same archaeological practice be both post-colonial and neo-colonial? Can the potential for a post-colonial archaeology inhere within a neo-colonial archaeology, and *visa versa*?

There is a third option with regard to post-colonial versus neo-colonial archaeologies which I have not mentioned. That is that South African archaeology, itself thoroughly neo-colonial in character, might act as a regional metropole in an African context. Vines notes, for example, that:

British, U.S., Swedish, Norwegian and South African funds have been competing, like nineteenth-century expeditions in Egypt, for access to particularly sought-after sites along the East African coast and in southern Africa. Research permission for prestige sites is being given to the highest bidder - well designed research proposals playing a very minor role. (15)

What I would like to see (what I hope for) is the emergence of a post-colonial archaeology alongside more traditional forms of archaeology, which can at once answer the needs of a post-colonial society, and point the way for a more thorough-going transformation of disciplinary practice.

Let me end as I began by situating these concerns within the symbol-system which has underwritten this work as a whole. December 1997, the month in which I began writing this final chapter, saw the playing-out of a different kind of ceremony on the national stage: the ruling African National Congress held their fiftieth national congress over five days in the town of Mafikeng. At this congress, in accordance with his own previously publicised wish, Nelson Mandela stepped-

down as president of the ANC in preparation for his retirement from active politics. The period in which I have been at work on this project has corresponded closely with what historians might one day refer to as the Age of Mandela - a period which for those of us who have lived through it has had a character of its own. In some ways this has been a natural association. There has been the sense in South African life that we should be looking backwards and forwards, that what we decide now will set a pattern for the years to come - a time of planning and review in which new policies are created, old policies and ways of operating set aside.

However, my deepest impression of the period is of its double-sided nature. On the one hand, a period of extraordinary opportunity and celebration in which many aspects of life have been transformed beyond recall. On the other hand, a period of disappointments and divisions which has seen the entrenching of historical forms of inequality and the emergence of a new suite of social and economic woes. It has been a period, that is to say, in which hope and despair have been delicately poised. And for me it is finally this which constitutes the best argument for a post-colonial archaeology: that, in a period of compromise and uncertainty, it lies, quite simply, on the side of hope.

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